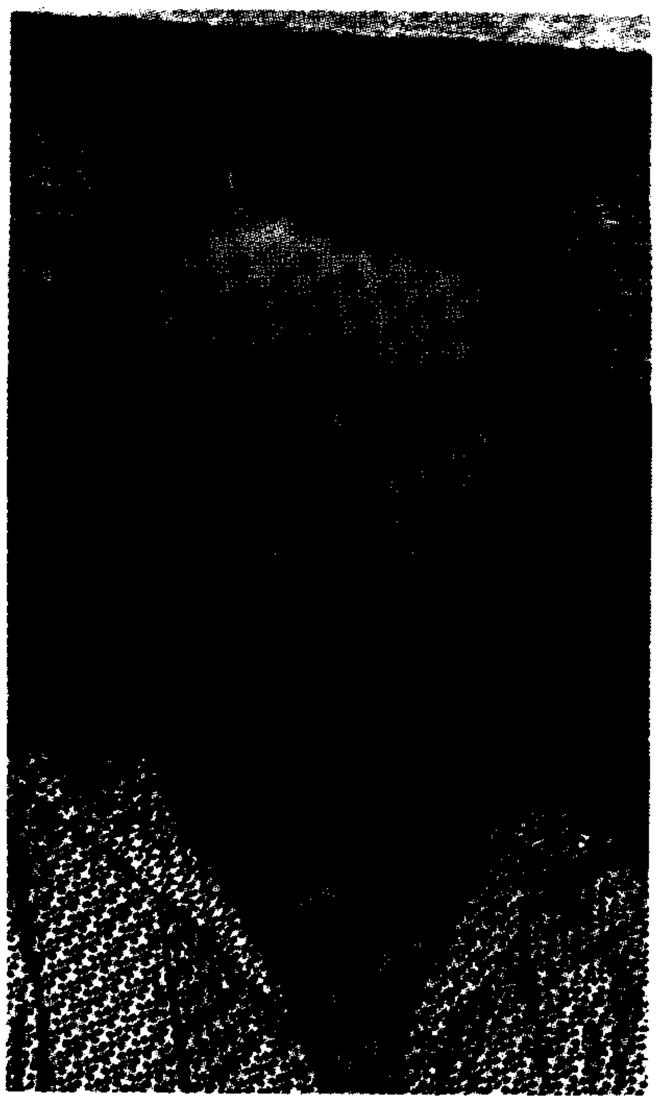
No. 1084
11 July –
24 July 2003
£1.30

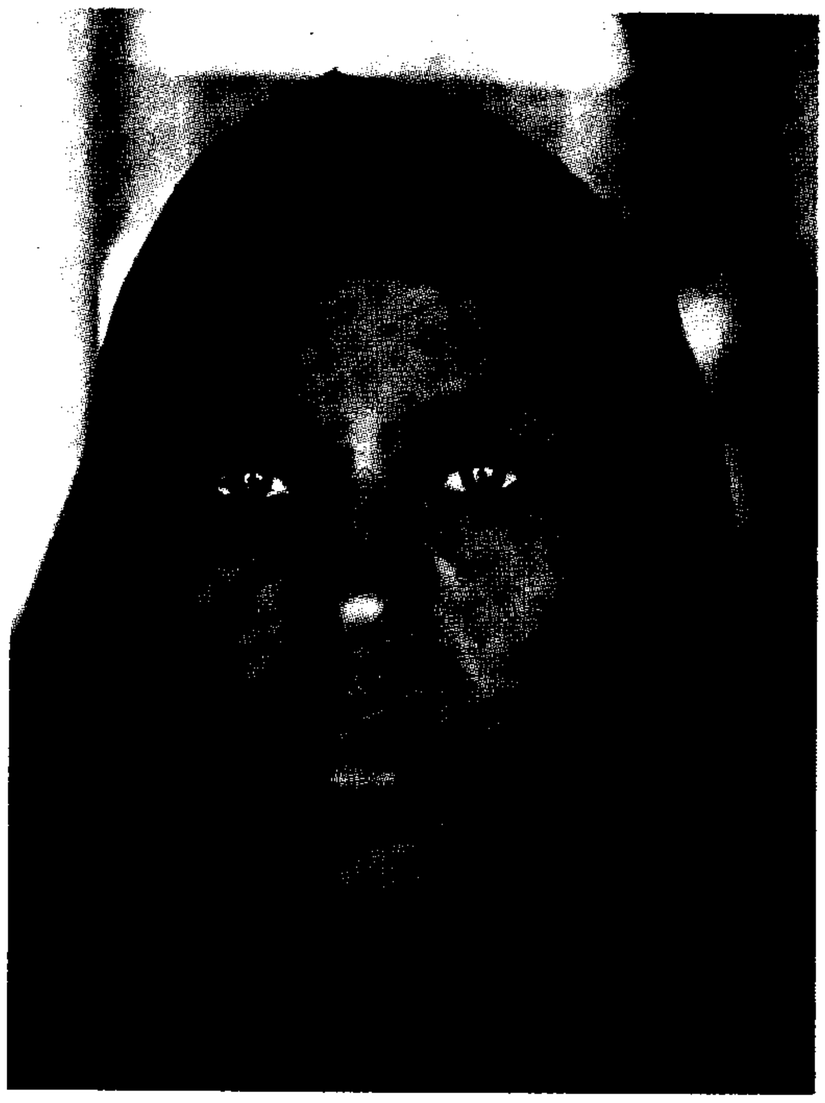
PRIVATE EYE

BUMPER ISSUE: DEAR BILL SPECIAL

BLAIR DEFENDS INTEGRITY



Alabama Cotton Tenant Farmer Wife 1936. Walker Evans ©The Museum of Modern Art, New York



Abshiro Aden Mohammed, Women s Leader, Somali Refugee Camp, Degahaley, Kenya 2000. ©Fazal Sheikh

Fraternity Student 1925. August Sander ©Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur – August Sander Archiv, Cologne, DACS, London, 2003

© 2003 UBS. The key symbol and UBS are the registered and unregistered trademarks of the UBS Group of companies around the world. All rights reserved.

Inspiring art

UBS is passionate in its support of contemporary art worldwide. We sponsored Tate's recent *Warhol* and *Lucian Freud* exhibitions. Now we are supporting something completely new – *Cruel and Tender: The Real in the Twentieth-Century Photograph,* Tate's first and one of London's largest exhibitions of photographic artists. Come and see how this new collection of photographic art challenges the conventional view of the world. A visit would be an inspired idea.

Cruel and Tender
The Real in the Twentieth-Century Photograph
5 June – 7 September 2003
Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1
Sunday – Thursday 10.00 – 18.00
Friday – Saturday 10.00 – 22.00

Wealth Management | Global Asset Management | Investment Bank

UBS

LADY Gnome

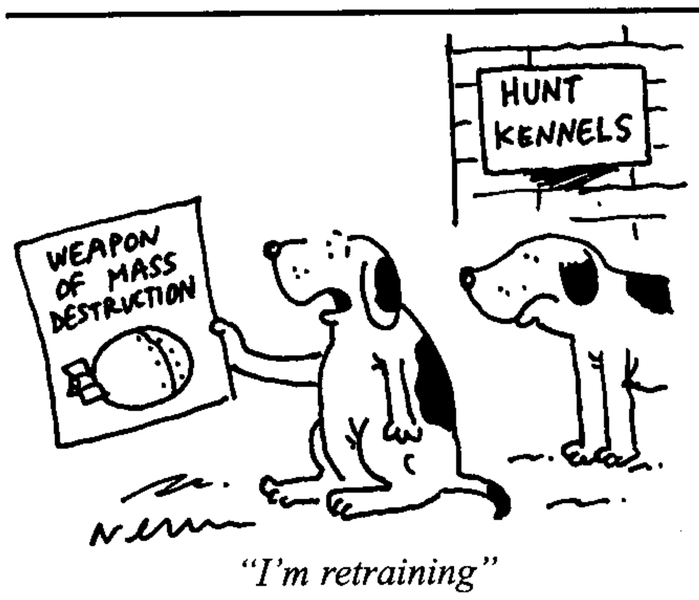
The appalling miscarriage of justice that has seen my husband Lord Gnome wrongly incarcerated for the last two years is undoubtedly the worst in the whole history of the legal system.

Those responsible for the vindictive campaign that led to his false imprisonment will not go unpunished. Thanks to secret tape recordings made at dinner parties, I now have proof that over 60 million people in this country have expressed the view that my husband Lord Gnome was "a bit of a crook who had it coming to him".

How then could he possibly have had a fair trial in this country when the entire population was prejudiced against him in this way?

I shall therefore not rest until every single man, woman and child in Britain is arrested and charged with perverting the course of justice. In the meantime, let me make my position clear. My husband is as innocent as I am.

Lady Gnome,
The Old-but-still-looking-very-young Vicarage,
Grantchester,
Cambridge B1 TCH.



"I'm retraining"

EDITORIAL
6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN. Tel: 020 7437 4017. Fax: 020 7437 0705. **Email:** strobes@private-eye.co.uk
http://www.private-eye.co.uk

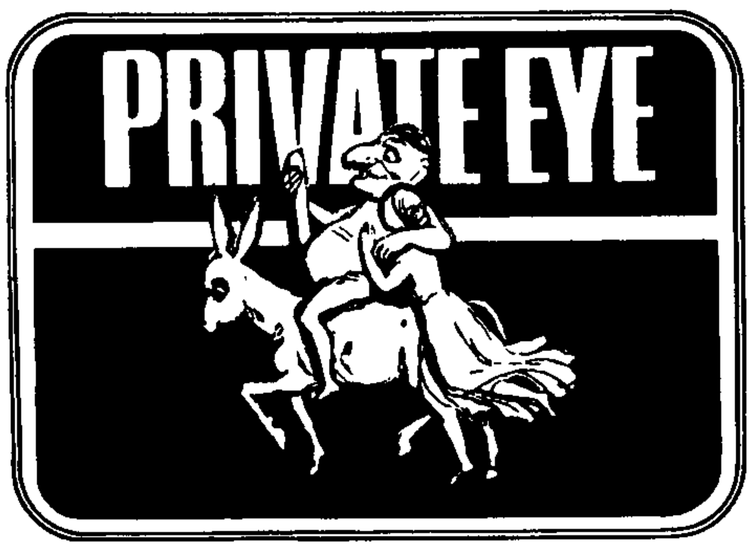
PRIVATE EYE SUBSCRIPTIONS/SALES
PO Box 326, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FA.
Subscription enquiries: 0870 750 1714
Fax: 01795 414 555. Overseas: 01795 414 871
Special Reports: 0870 750 1711 **Books:** 0870 750 1712
Email: private-eye@galleon.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
£19 per annum. Europe and Eire £27. Airmail (rest of world) £35. Cheques/POs to Private Eye. Mastercard/Visa.

ADVERTISING
020-7923 5402

Published by Pressdram Ltd, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN. **Printed** by BGP Ltd, Bicester OX6 7QZ . **Distributed** by P.E. Distributions, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN. 020 7437 4017.

ABC



Sexed-up edition!

■ **Anyone for Denis? Best of Dear Bill** 21-26
■ **A tribute to Larry** 28, 29
■ **Plus: Hackwatch on Andrew Gilligan** 5
■ **John 'Belgrano' Stanley: Man in the Eye** 6
■ **Pom Wars: In the Courts with Dirty Des** 7
■ **Stella McCartney's Diary** 31
■ **Cheque, mate? Chess News** 33

INTELLIGENCE FAILURE

"I DO not find Mr [Alastair] Campbell by any means a wholly satisfactory or convincing witnesss," a high court judge concluded in 1996, after hearing testimony from Tony Blair's spin doctor. "Mr Campbell was less than completely open and frank. He did not impress me as a witness in whom I could feel 100 percent confident."

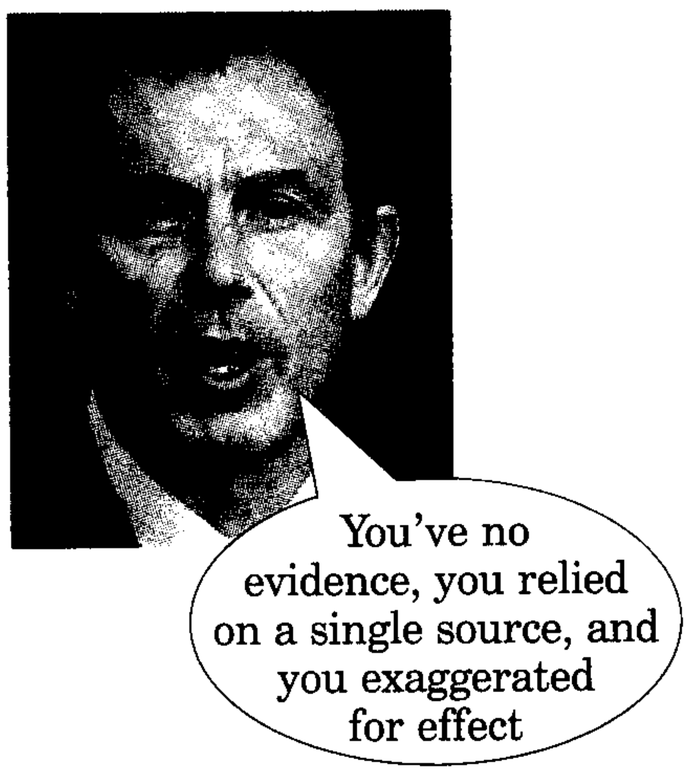
Just so: Campbell has so many previous convictions for this offence that even old friends can't understand how he now keeps a straight face when protesting at the appalling accusation that he might occasionally sex up the truth. During his own days as a "reporter", Campbell was a shameless propagandist who happily embellished stories to damage the Conservatives. As he replied to a reader who accused him of being a stirrer: "What's wrong with stirring?"

Old colleagues are equally amused by the reverence he now displays for the work of the intelligence services (though it appears not to be reciprocated). Before entering government, Ally had nothing but contempt for the spooks. "Why are we always so surprised at the notion that MI5 agents bug royals and senior politicians?" he wrote in *Today* newspaper 10 years ago. "What else does anyone imagine they do? You only have to drive past their new HQ or the massive new MI6 offices to realise we have security services way out of proportion to our world standing… Yet because the security services have never been subject to parliamentary control, and MPs are scared stiff of them, their budgets are approved." Might this possibly explain why certain MI6 bigwigs have been briefing against him?

Most comical of all is Campbell's stalwart defence of the Anglo-American war effort. Until quite recently, Ally was a belligerent anti-American of the Pilger school, forever denouncing the US as an imperialist warmonger. "Britain's obsession with America has harmed foreign policy interests," he wrote in 1994. "Meanwhile, the European countries with whom we should be forging a special relationship look on not with jealousy, but with wonder. They wonder why on earth the British choose subservience to a superpower over a relationship of trust with equals."

Still, no doubt he had plenty of sources for all his allegations…

BLAIR ATTACKS BBC



DESPITE the controversy over his sexed-up dossier, Tony Blair continues to rely on sources known only to himself when trying to get to the bottom of affairs in Iraq.

At prime minister's questions on 18 June he was asked about what might come up for discussion during the Russian state visit. He replied: "I always raise the issue of Chechnya with President Putin, but I do so in a way that recognises the point that, as a result of terrorism emanating from extremists based in Chechnya, the Russian people have also suffered a very great deal."

He then added: "It is worth pointing out the fact that, when we finally won the conflict in Iraq, some of the people who were still offering resistance were extremists from Chechnya."

This will have come as news to Putin, among others. In the same week a senior Kremlin official told the *Financial Times* that they had no knowledge of any Chechen involvement in Iraq.While there were a handful of reports that US troops had captured Chechen fighters in both Baghdad and Nasiriya during the early stages of the war, these have never been confirmed by the Pentagon, The White House or the US state department.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

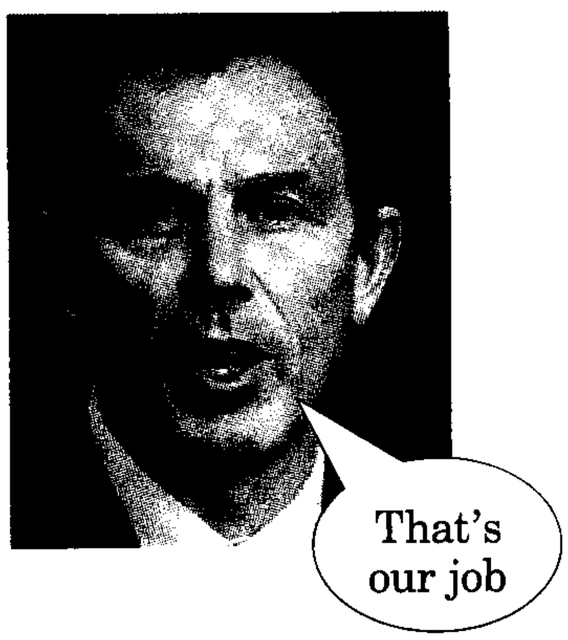
"The PM was absolutely, in his own terms, honest." — Labour MP Dr Tony Wright, talking to Jeremy Paxman on *Newsnight*, 25 June.

ANYONE casting around to create a dossier of evidence of weapons of mass destruction in junior axis-of-evil country Syria (as doubtless they will in the near future) need look no further than the UK's own export listings.

Tucked away in the 500-plus page *Strategic Export Controls Annual Report* on arms sales – right beneath the sale of vintage military aircraft to Switzerland – is listed the granting by the UK government of individual export licences for "toxic chemical precursors" and open licences for exporting "technology for the production of toxins" to Syria.

Of course licences don't *necessarily* mean a product is ever shipped (a licence for submarine parts has been granted this year to land-locked Paraguay) but does make it highly likely. Also licensed to Syria this year: armoured all-wheel-drive vehicles, nuclear grade graphite and military communications equipment.

With US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld desperately suggesting that Iraqi weapons boffins and materials were sneaked into Syria, the place must be bursting at the seams with armaments.



ONE of Tony Blair's best defences against the charge that his administration "sexed up" reports of Iraq's military capability is that other countries also believed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

The war of course revealed that Saddam had no gas bombs or germ rockets ready for launch; but at least Britain's honest mistake was shared by other countries. However, that defence is now beginning to fall apart, not least in Spain where prime minister José Maria Aznar had stood shoulder to shoulder with Blair and President Bush before the invasion. He said: "You can be sure that I am telling you the truth. The Iraqi regime has weapons of mass destruction."

However, the daily *El Pais* is now quoting sources in Spain's CNI intelligence service as having said before the war that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, nor the capacity to use them and thus posed no imminent threat that would have required immediate military action.

El Pais alleges that Aznar ignored the advice and instead cherry picked what outrageous intelligence details he could. Sound familiar? According to the newspaper, the CNI never agreed that there was a link between Saddam and al-Qaeda, despite claims by Aznar's government that such a link existed.

El Pais adds that Aznar had access to documents from Nato's intelligence division, which also said Iraq was not a present threat. It is hard to imagine that Blair did not also have access to the Nato papers, especially since Labour's George Robertson now leads the military organisation.

Apparently CNI did say that "Iraq still has the will to develop weapons of mass destruction (especially) in chemical and biological areas as well as missiles." But having the will is not quite the same as having the wherewithal to make WMDs.

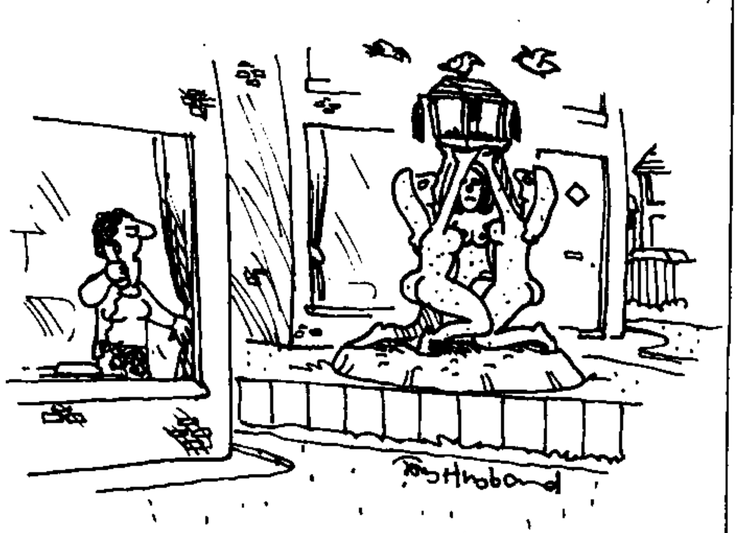
THE row over the extent to which intelligence reports were "sexed up" is slowly gaining momentum in the United States too.

Confirmation of the allies' "enthusiasm" comes from former Nato boss General Wesley Clark, who told NBC television's *Meet the Press* last month that, days after the Twin Towers tragedy, the White House had pressured him to say that Saddam Hussein was behind the 11 September attacks.

Presidential staff were (and are) unable to offer evidence for this link. But as Clark said: "There was a concerted effort during the fall of 2001, starting immediately after 9/11, to pin 9/11 and the terrorism problem on Saddam Hussein."

Asked who was making the link, Clark responded: "Well, it came from the White House, it came from people around the White House... I got a call on 9/11. I was on CNN, and I got a call at my home saying, 'You got to say this is connected. This is state-sponsored terrorism. This has to be connected to Saddam Hussein.' I said, 'But – I'm willing to say it, but what's your evidence?' And I never got any evidence."

Clark's comments got almost no publicity in the US and, consequently, none whatsoever in the UK.



"Yes, I'd like to complain about next door's bird table"

Street of Shame

BAD KARMA continues to hover over Carole Caplin's "Well-Being" column in the *Mail on Sunday*'s Night and Day magazine.

While Caplin dispenses her peculiar mix of new-age wisdom and old-fashioned revenge (a recent column managed to segue between the ineffectiveness of diets and how "I have been on the end of ridiculously confusing media treatment"), and editor Christina Appleyard continues to shell out a small fortune for it, the cash has not actually made it as far as Caplin's own pockets.

As the *Eye* reported in February, the deal with the magazine was struck by celeb fixer Ian Monk. Fresh from his triumph in selling the unsellable, Monk left PR company MacLaurin Media a month later, taking Caplin with him alongside other enormously popular clients like Will Carling and Anthea Turner.

Unfortunately, Ms Caplin's erstwhile partner Peter Foster still owes rather a lot of money to MacLaurin Media and its parent company, Hatch Group (among others), and the company has refused to pass some £14,000 of fees to Caplin until she settles up on what they regard as a joint account. Caplin, in return, has threatened to sue: "It really is very unpleasant and I hate going to law but I am left with no alternative as Hatch Group has taken my hard-earned money."

"SHARIF Ali bin Hussein is looking down at the parched brown ground as our plane circles Baghdad. 'This is the first time I've been back since I was two,' he says."

Thus began a long report by the *Daily Telegraph*'s Alice Thomson, describing how she had travelled with the heir-apparent to the Iraqi throne on his return to Baghdad.

Curiously, however, most of the piece seemed to be based on an interview conducted at his house in London. It was only at the end that Thomson reverted to on-the-spot reportage: "As Sharif Ali steps off the plane, he is close to tears. The American soldiers in Baghdad are unsure whether to bow or salute, but end up helping him down the ramp. He offers a prayer, then says: 'Tonight, I will be able to sleep on the rooftop under Iraqi stars. I cannot believe it.'" And, er, that's it.

Readers may have wondered how the heir-apparent was greeted in the city, but Thomson wasn't telling – because she didn't know. Having agreed with editor Charles Moore that it would be unsafe for her to venture into Baghdad, the fearless hackette had simply flown to Iraq, bade farewell to the king-in waiting and then remained on the plane until it flew her straight back to London.

O·B·N

"ALASTAIR Campbell's performance in front of the select committee was bullish, forceful, passionate and executed with staggering conviction. If anything was sexed up it was the spin doctor in his crisp white shirt and macho charisma proving among Westminster's hand-wringing, lily-livered apologists there's at least one man prepared to say boo to a goose.

"It's widely alleged Campbell is really the man running the country. Thank God for that."

— Sue Carroll on her old colleague Alastair Campbell, the *Mirror*.

● **The Laidley Worm** – Would the Laidley Worm like to make discreet, secure contact again?

NICE to see the *Sun*'s TV department doing its best to stay in the boss's good books. On 14 June its listings magazine ran an interview with Ross Kemp, star and hero of ITV's feeble Action Man series, *Ultimate Force*.

"Wading through a rat-ridden sewer and swimming in the sea on a freezing January night might not be everyone's idea of a good time. But former *EastEnder* Ross Kemp took it in his stride for SAS drama, *Ultimate Force*, which is back for a second series," began Diana Harris's profile. And so it gushed for another 400 words.

Four days later TV critic Rachel Roberts followed in the same vein when she recommended the series in her "What to Watch" guide. "Ross Kemp was born to play Sergeant Henno Garvie in the hit SAS drama," she drooled.

On 7 July the paper – not known hitherto for its interest in global TV distribution – then devoted four paragraphs to the sale of *Ultimate Force* to broadcasters in six other countries. Or as the rag put it: "TV Hardman Ross Kemp's SAS action series Ultimate Force is set to become a global success."

As *Eye* readers, if not *Sun* readers, will know, Kemp is otherwise known as Mr Rebekah Wade, husband of the *Sun*'s editrix.

PRODUCTION company Television Corporation's announcement that it was expecting a half-year loss of more than £1m was reported in almost universally gloomy terms in the city pages.

"The company's new finance director is negotiating with its bank to try to restructure its £8m overdraft facility," reported the *Guardian*. "Shares in the company dropped by more than a quarter yesterday as the company shelved plans to pay an interim dividend and investors feared a meltdown."

Over at the *Sun*, however, things were considerably more rosy. Under the cheery headline "Bail Us Out!", business editor Ian King encouraged readers to take advantage of a golden opportunity: "The company has some great assets, and, if the shares fall much further, they could be worth speculating on."

Could this bullishness be in any way connected to the fact that Television Corporation is the company behind Sky Sports' live football broadcasts, thanks to a £10m deal signed by *Sun* proprietor Rupert Murdoch two years ago?

AS IF Conrad Black hadn't enough financial worries already, he now faces a vast increase in sick pay as *Daily Telegraph* hacks collapse under the strain of operating the paper's crappy new computer system.

The software, bought at a cost of $20m from the Utah-based firm DTI, was supposed to "streamline" the newspaper's production. But in the departments where it has been introduced so far – arts, books, leaders, the op-ed page – staff are having to revert to the old, much-derided Atex system to get the paper out at all. A few weeks ago, continental editions of the *Telegraph* had a full-page advertisement where the op-ed page should have been, as the new system had crashed just before deadline.

Another problem with the DTI software is that it requires constant use of the mouse, which has led to an epidemic of repetitive strain injury among Conrad Black's toiling galley-slaves. Letters editor Sandra Barwick was recently hospitalised, leaving her deputy Erin Baker in charge – until she too succumbed to RSI and went home. As the casualty list lengthens, the paper may soon be forced to rely entirely on the one hack who shows no sign of infirmity – sprightly 120-year-old cub reporter W.F. Deedes.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Daily Mail hackette Jaci Stephen, when asked about her experiences working on *This Morning* with John Leslie: "Kissing, fondling, heavy-handed advances... and he still said no".

"Bad boy, just wait until my article on parenting is in the Guardian..."

HERE's a moral dilema for arbiters of public taste and decency: when is it appropriate for a media organisation to show footage of dying or dead men?

If you're a *Sun* leader writer, then it was an act of outrageous insensitivity for the BBC to broadcast (albeit briefly) footage of the corpses of two British soldiers killed during the War in Iraq in May. "Tony Blair described the screening of these pictures by the Arab TV channel Al-Jazeera as 'cruel beyond comprehension'. It is beyond our comprehension how the BBC can think of showing them on a Sunday night. If the scenes are not axed, the BBC will be shamed for ever," a *Sun* editorial thundered on 27 May.

Major Gen Ken Perkins, the paper's "distinguished military adviser", went further: "Once again BBC TV is plumbing the depths. They should be renamed the Baghdad Broadcasting Corporation. What justification is there for putting the dead men's next of kin through further mental torture? No justification at all."

It is, however, perfectly acceptable for a newspaper to cover its front page with a photo of a Cameroon footballer in his death throes. For this was the grim image that greeted *Sun* readers on the morning of 27 June, as the Murdoch rag had no problems acknowledging: "Soccer star Marc-Vivien Foe lies dying on the pitch yesterday as opponents and the referee desperately call for medical help." Perhaps news editors at the Currant Bun assumed that black African footballers are unlikely to have *Sun*-reading families who can publicise their disgust.

Except, of course, that Foe played for Manchester City. So when complaints from City fans began to pour in, some back-tracking was clearly required. At first the *Sun* tried to defend its position by admitting that "newspaper pictures of the scene were indeed shocking. But this was a dramatic event seen by thousands inside the stadium and millions more on live TV." Ironically, exactly the same sort of argument could have justified the BBC's broadcast, since millions in the Arab world had already seen the shots of the British troops on TV.

By Monday 30 June, the press complaints commission had received a record 400 complaints about the picture. The *Sun* hastily tried to make amends by launching a Marc-Vivien Foe fund to raise money for schools in Cameroon. News International executives are now hoping they have done enough to avert a collapse in sales in Manchester similar to that which occurred on Merseyside afters its reporting of the Hillsborough disaster, which was distinguished by... graphic photos of football fans as they met their death.

IN HIS *Daily Telegraph* City diary last Wednesday, Simon Goodley ridiculed the publishers of Nick Clarke's new book about British personalities, including Charles Saatchi. "A photograph on the front cover shows brother Maurice instead of the subject Charles," he noted, incredulous that anyone could make such an idiotic mistake.

Anyone can, however – even the *Daily Telegraph*. Almost exactly a year ago, on 4 July 2002, the paper's Peterborough diary ran this grovelling apology: "My head hangs in shame this morning. For, yesterday, I inexplicably illustrated a report on the accidental de-frosting of one of Charles Saatchi's controversial pieces of modern art – a bust made of frozen human blood – with a photograph of the noted collector's younger brother, Lord (Maurice) Saatchi. Many apologies to both brothers Saatchi and any mystified readers."

The only difference between the two cock-ups is that the *Torygraph*'s was doubly imbecilic — since its story about the defrosted bust was codswallop anyway.

JUST FANCY THAT!

"I have been a priest for thirty years and more and I know from experience that a third of all Anglican clergymen are gay."
— Rev. Peter Mullen, *The Times*

HACKWATCH

Andrew Gilligan

THE presence of BBC hack Andrew Gilligan as a thorn in the side of government has come as a surprise to former university contemporaries who recall a rather sweaty, smarmy hack who was every bit the "new" Labour loyalist (and had already worked as a researcher for a Labour MP).

That his reporting methods should be called into question was not such a surprise, however since Gilligan had not endeared himself to fellow undergraduates at Cambridge by raiding a student's room in pursuit of a story.

One of Gilligan's last acts at Cambridge was to pen a scoop for the *Observer* about foreign students being able to buy sinecure degrees. Very little supporting evidence was ever found, and the source of Gilligan's story was felt not to be entirely reliable but the intrepid newshound then moved to be defence correspondent of the *Sunday Telegraph* where his career was not without blemish.

Literally so: editor Dominic Lawson came in one morning to find several used tissues scattered around the sofa in his office, and then discovered from the CCTV cameras that Gilligan had crashed out there the previous night. Under interrogation, the defence correspondent insisted he had not been doing anything embarrassing but merely needed to blow his nose rather often. ("It's not true about the tissues," Gilligan assured the *Eye* at the time, before we had even mentioned the Kleenex problem.) But Lawson took no chances: the sofa was replaced at once.

Writing in the *Spectator* a few weeks ago about the war in Iraq, Gilligan couldn't resist a sideswipe against the government: "I am told that Downing Street has even compiled one of its famous 'dossiers' on my own reporting of those events. Let us hope that this one, at least, was not copied from a PhD student's thesis on the internet." This seemed a little rich given that, as the *Eye* reported in 1995,

"He's showing off his trophy wife again"

Gilligan had himself written a story for the *Sunday Telegraph* about new police helmets which turned out to have been lifted more or less word for word from the London *Evening Standard*.

However, it was as the defence and diplomatic correspondent for the BBC's *Today* programme that Gilligan first came to the attention of Alastair Campbell. The origin of their feud dates back to November 2000 when, in the run-up to the Nice summit and much to No 10's irritation, the newly-installed Gilligan excitedly told *Today* listeners that he had exclusively unearthed details of a "new constitution for Europe".

When the EU did indeed put forward a draft constitution a few weeks ago, it was trumpeted as belated vindication of the original story. In fact, it was nothing of the sort. The document Gilligan was referring to had been nothing more than a proposal to divide the EU's four existing treaties into two, by cutting down the number of articles and by using plain English instead of Brussels bureaucratese. Henceforth, Downing Street began to refer to him as "Gullible Gilligan". Not anymore.

THE *Eastern Daily Press*, Britain's biggest selling regional daily, has been running a vigorous campaign for improvements to the A47 trunk road that bisects Norfolk from east to west.

The 2 July edition devoted four pages to the subject, including an emotive front page headline reading "158 deaths in their hands". This figure became less shocking when one actually read the story – it referred to the number of deaths that *might* occur over the next *30 years* if the road isn't improved at all: about five a year.

At the eastern end of the A47 lies Great Yarmouth, a largely moribund fishing port that for nearly 40 years has had ambitions of reversing its decline by building an outer harbour. But there would be no point in building ro-ro ferry berths and a container port without a vastly improved road network in East Anglia.

The company formed to get the harbour project under way is East Port Great Yarmouth Ltd. Its chairman is one Richard Wilson Jewson, who by an amazing coincidence is also chairman of Archant... the regional newspaper group which owns the *Eastern Daily Press*. This connection, by a curious oversight, has not been mentioned in the course of the *EDP*'s emotional road safety campaign.

THE NEOPHILIACS

"Texture is the new colour." — *Trading Up*, BBC1.

"Water is the new tea." — *Guardian*.

"Saturday is the new Sunday." — *Financial Times*.

"In the post-9/11 era, stale is the new fresh." — *Slate*.

"Being off-message is the new on-message." — Iain MacWhirter, Glasgow *Herald*.

"Oldies are rapidly becoming the new new, or, in fact, retro is becoming the new futuristic." — Miles Mendoza, Radio 2.

"Acetylation — the new phosphorylation? It's not quite Gucci, but fashion moves fast in the field of chromatin structure..." — BioMedNet news.

"Are transfatty acids the new tobacco?" — *You and Yours*, Radio 4.

"America is the new Germany." – The *Times*.

"Is Fez the new Marrakesh?" — *Observer*.

"Could Dubrovnik be the new St Tropez?" — The *Times*.

"'Fuck' is the new 'the'." — *New York Observer*.

"Six months is the new two years." — Richard Madeley, Channel 4.

POLICE raids on high street mobile phone shops as part of a clampdown on suspected insurance fraud have cast Britain's crime statistics in an interesting new light.

Inspector Knacker believes phone shop staff have been encouraging people falsely to report their phones stolen rather than lost in order to get insurance companies to fund a new one. In some cases the scam is simply to get an "up-grade" courtesy of the insurer.

Police believe that up to 100,000 false reports of mobile phone thefts and robberies are made each year, inflating crime figures, raising fears of street crime and wasting police time.

However, Tony Blair and home secretary David Blunkett responded to the resulting wave of tabloid street crime hysteria by promising tougher penalties and to have street crime "under control" in six months. With mobile phones believed to have been the trigger for half of all London street robberies, lord chief justice Lord Woolf joined in too and recommended minimum jail terms for even first-time phone robbers.

But as Simon Hughes, the Lib Dem shadow home secretary, points out: "This extraordinary development could blow the government's multi-million pound street crime initiative out of the water." There were 121,375 street robberies recorded in England and Wales for 2001/2, an increase of 28 percent. Given the claim that many of those may have been false, the huge street crime bulge which triggered the panic may have been an illusion.

"Instead of a calm and level-headed approach, ministers allowed themselves to be carried away by the hysteria," says Hughes.

Indeed. Had they looked at the British Crime Survey, considered by most criminologists to be a far better indication of crime and crime patterns, instead of police records, they would have seen there was no such robbery upsurge.

NEW Labour panjandrums are infuriating their Welsh comrades again with a cunning plan to block left-wingers in constituencies that become vacant.

First up for a wimmin-only shortlist – ie an all-Blairite shortlist – is the Old Labour stronghold of Blaenau Gwent; as Ebbw Vale, the former stamping ground of Aneurin Bevan and then Michael Foot.

Local MP and left-winger Llew Smith is fuming. He and the comrades took to the street the day after the announcement and collected 1,000 signatures in an hour against an all-wimmin list. Only one signatory was in favour.

Swansea East is another candidate for a wimmin-only shortlist and only Bridgend escapes; but then the local Labour party there is more manageable. So will local democracy prevail and the national party back down? Unlikely.

THE state visit of Vladmir Putin called for a heightened sense of diplomacy *at the* foreign office.

So it was unfortunate that the transcript of the joint press conference Mr Putin hosted with Tony Blair on 26 June, which was distributed throughout the media, managed to conflate the two men's job titles into a spectacularly ungracious introduction: "Opening Remarks: Tony Blair, President, Great Britain."

Thankfully the 12,800-word document was swiftly corrected and redistributed before Her Majesty, Mr Putin's real host, could take offence.

MORE on the scandalous privatisation of Qinetiq, the defence research body which, courtesy of British taxpayers, is now a wealthy landlord.

The *Eye* has learnt that the company has been in discussion with the local authority about the possibility of building 2,000 homes on ex-MoD land at Pyestock, near Farnborough. At £50,000 a plot, the development could net Qinetiq £100m.

Add that to a reputed £120m deal with developers for the Longcross tank site at Chobham, and you may well be wondering at the government's outrageous decision to sell off a major share of the defence research group to the Carlyle Group for just £42m (a deal, incidentally, that cost taxpayers double that in legal and advisory fees).

Opponents, including the Defend Our Commons campaign, are trying to block other big Qinetiq sell-offs claiming that because much of the land once acquisitioned by the MoD is no longer wanted, it should revert to public use.

POOR timing by electricity supplier SWEB, which wrote to customers last month to say that it would be upping the bills for domestic customers.

The price increase followed hard on the heels of a major national audit office (NAO) report accusing electricity suppliers of failing to pass massive cash savings on to their customers. The report said that six in ten households were paying more than 20 percent over the odds because they had stuck with local suppliers rather than switching to other companies.

The NAO report focused on the huge drop in the cost of supplying energy since the national electricity trading arrangements in 1998, with falls of up to 40 percent in wholesale prices.

Yet SWEB's letter to customers says the price rise is necessary because "we've recently experienced increased costs in supplying energy". The question is, will they pass on any future price decreases to the customers?

ONE OBE overlooked in the *Eye*'s round-up of gongs last issue was that awarded to Kathleen Tattersall, director-general of troubled exam board the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA).

The exam board came under heavy criticism from inspectors earlier this year after an unauthorised person gained access to a high security exam certificates storage area in February. Further security breaches during this summer's exam season resulted in exams having to be rewritten at short notice. AQA has had a fairly disastrous year financially too, with losses of more that £17m.

"I've just been made Minister for Children"

A "LIAR" and a "crook" – that was how MPs on the powerful Commons public accounts committee described Imperial Tobacco's chief executive Gareth Davis when he gave evidence during their investigation into tobacco smuggling in June last year.

Keen to defend itself from such allegations, the firm has recently appointed a new head press officer. Alex Parsons comes hot-foot from the fabulously corrupt energy giant Enron, several of whose bosses were, er, arrested for being liars and crooks.

MAN IN THE EYE

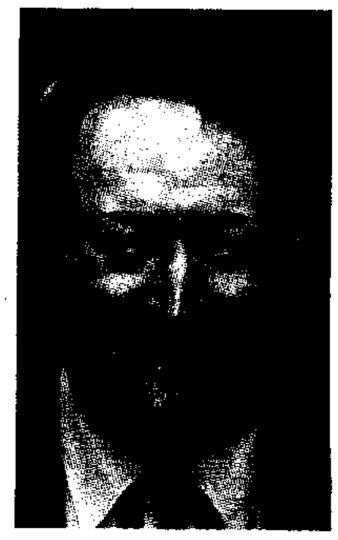
SIR JOHN STANLEY

NO ONE was harder on Alastair Campbell during his performance in front of the foreign affairs select committee than the veteran Tory MP Sir John Stanley, perennial runner-up to Patrick Cormack for the title of Westminster's Most Pompous Ass.

Stanley gave the PM's spin-meister a real grilling over the famous dodgy dossier, accusing him of "a very, very grave failure". He solemnly added that Campbell may well have caused the prime minister to mislead the House of Commons by giving the impression that the dossier contained the imprimatur of the intelligence services. Overall, he reached the stern verdict that "some of your answers were less than credible".

Another to feel the lashing of Stanley's tongue was Jack Straw, whom he accused of trying to distract the committee with "red herrings" in his answers to questions about the ludicrous Niger uranium connection.

The innocent observer might conclude from this that the Tory MP for Tonbridge and Malling is a staunch defender of open government. Yet this hardly chimes with his role in the government cover-up of the sinking of the Belgrano and the subsequent prosecution of civil servant Clive Ponting.



As minister of defence, Stanley was first drawn into the cover-up in 1984 when Arthur Gavshon and Desmond Rice wrote to the MoD requesting permission to interview key naval personnel for their book, *The Sinking of the Belgrano*. The MoD flatly turned down their request, but invited the authors to submit written questions. When Stanley saw these questions, he rejected all official replies, fearing (rightly) that the MoD would be forced to lie or give away the truth.

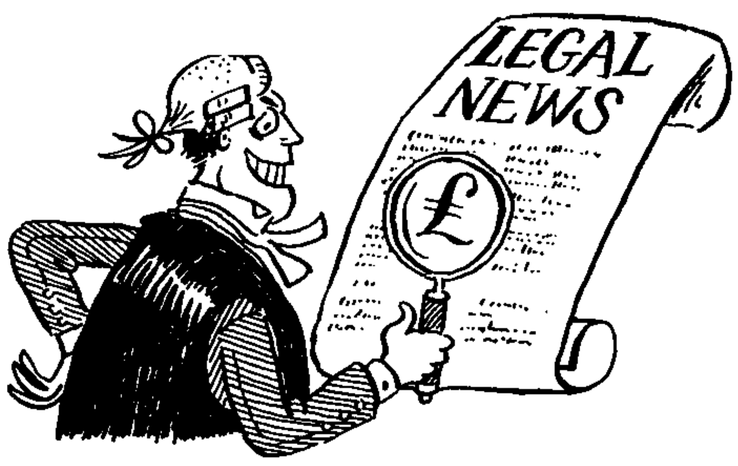
As pressure mounted and the Labour party began to scrutinise exactly what had happened and when to the Argentinian warship, Ponting recalled how Stanley asked his civil servants to prepare two official responses: "One would give the correct date of the detection and sighting of the *General Belgrano*, the other would stick to the earlier incorrect version." No prizes for guessing which the minister preferred.

When it became clear that the matter was not going to disappear, Stanley tried to invoke the tried and tested excuse of official secrecy. "I think we should claim that everything is classified and refuse to answer any of the questions." Unfortunately Tam Dalyell wasn't to be fobbed off with this excuse and continued to press for a clear and honest answer. Stanley finally tried to draw a curtain on the affair by writing to Dalyell that "it is not our practice to comment on military operational matters (or details of military operations)". For good measure, the minister loyally told his boss Michael Heseltine that he would have "no difficulty" peddling the line that the information was classified.

As Ponting pointed out in his account of the affair, "this intervention by John Stanley was a move from failure to provide information to a deliberate attempt to mislead. The reply he suggested was false in two respects. First, it is perfectly normal practice to comment on many aspects of military operational matters. Second the information about the sinking was not classified... What Stanley wanted was to use national security as an excuse for not releasing to parliament information which was simply politically embarrassing".

Compared with Stanley's conduct, Campbell comes across as a card-carrying Charter 88 member.

'Backbiter'



COLLEAGUES of Richard "Dirty" Desmond fear that the epic "Porn Wars" against his former smut-wallah Deric Botham are doing irreparable damage to his remaining brain cells.

Baffled and enraged by Botham's continued defiance, despite a barrage of writs, Dirty Des is taking refuge in loopy conspiracy theories. A few weeks ago he accused Botham's lawyers of funding the defence themselves – a touching tribute to the philanthropy of Messrs Jeffrey Green Russell, Mayfair solicitors, but one which they felt obliged to decline, pointing out that they are not (yet) a registered charity.

Nevertheless Dirty Des remains convinced that a mysterious "Mr Big" is secretly financing the resistance. And now he has a new suspect. A letter sent by Desmond's lawyers to Botham's lawyers last week, shown to the *Eye* by a concerned associate of Dirty Des, declares that "we are instructed by our client that he has received information that *Private Eye* is funding the defence of this and other litigation run through your firm on behalf of your client, Deric Botham, and his company… Please confirm whether or not *Private Eye* is funding the defence of this litigation." If Dirty Des believes that the notoriously parsimonious Lord Gnome would spend even 10p sponsoring a squabble between two pornographers, he really has lost his marbles.

Meanwhile the two sides in this interminable feud go to the high court on 15 July for "mediation". A peaceful outcome seems unlikely, however, as the mediation process relies on someone from each side having the authority to agree terms. Dirty Des undoubtedly has such authority – but he won't be present, having decided to send along his hapless lackey Paul Ashford instead. Since Ashford has never made a decision in 20 years of loyal service, and is scarcely able to use the lavatory without asking Desmond's permission, it is hard to see what if anything can be achieved. Which means that a full-scale high court trial is almost inevitable – at which Botham has promised to "sing like a canary" about the Desmond porn empire.

PS: Last Tuesday LBC radio presenter Nick Ferrari praised the new issue of *Penthouse* magazine, which includes a tribute to LBC. We can only hope that Richard Desmond wasn't listening, since Ferrari is also the editor-designate of Desmond's new London evening paper – and *Penthouse*, which was formerly produced in this country by Dirty Des, is now part of the porn empire run by, er, Deric Botham.

ANOTHER setback for easyGroup boss Stelios Haji-Ioannou in his attempt to bully other businesses with names similar to his own.

In May we reported how he had dropped legal action against Easyart because he was "too busy" to go to court (*Eye* 1080). On 26 June the UK Trademark Registry announced that easyGroup had failed in its attempt to block equity brokerage service Easybroker International from registering its name as a trademark.

The registry judged that "the different fields of activity involved, the weaknesses of EASY as a distinctive feature in its own right and the differences between the applicants' series of marks and the opponents' signs taken as wholes" ruled out any claim of misrepresentation, and awarded costs above the usual scale to reflect the "heaviness" of easyGroup's opposition.

DOWN ON THE FARM

A BIZARRE feature of British agriculture in recent years has been the number of people who have seriously proposed the elimination of our entire sheep industry.

Ever since wool money built many of our finest medieval churches, Britain has had the largest number of sheep in Europe. Before foot-and-mouth, 44 million of the EU's 100 million sheep were in the UK. Then along came Defra's "pre-emptive cull" which killed at least seven million.

Next came Professors John Collinge and Roy Anderson who each solemnly urged that, if only it could be proved that sheep could catch BSE, then the entire national flock must be destroyed. The only snag was that these scientists never actually managed to find a single BSE-infected sheep, so to date our 37 million remaining sheep have survived.

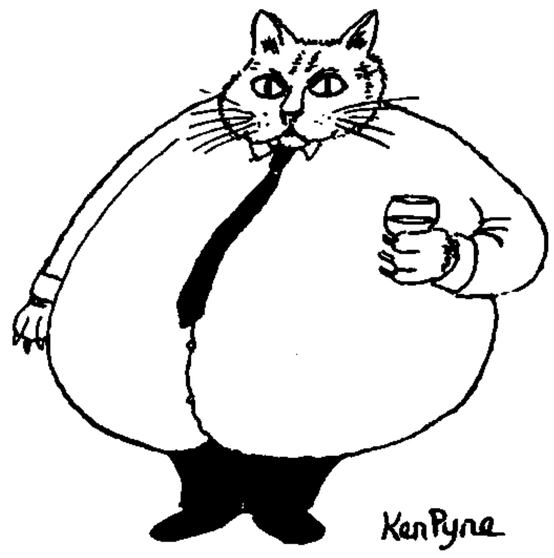
Now, however, with a directive currently going through the European parliament, the European commission may have come up with the weapon of mass destruction they have all been looking for. In the name of "traceability" to prevent the spread of disease, this orders that every sheep in the EU must be given two ear tags carrying an individual 14-digit number. Every time a sheep is moved, a record must be kept of its number. Finally, whenever a tag is lost, the farmer must track down the missing number and apply for a replacement. All of which, to the officials of "DG Sanco", the Brussels food safety directorate run by David Byrne, must have seemed perfectly rational and desirable.

The trouble was the officials had given no thought as to how such a scheme might operate in practice. Nor had they given thought to its cost, as Tory MEP Neil Parish discovered when he asked them. Since Mr Parish, unusually for an MEP, is also a farmer, he could see that the scheme was totally unworkable.

Previous experience has shown that sheep don't particularly like plastic tags being pinned into their ears and do anything to get rid of them. At least 15 percent of tags get lost, which means that each time a hill farmer with 600 sheep scattered over 50 square miles of moorland finds animals without tags, he must round up his entire flock to copy down every 14-digit number, simply to discover which numbers are missing. And how can a market such as Longtown, with a throughput of tens of thousands of animals a day, manage to record millions of digits in a few hours?

Mr Parish then discovered that Defra has carried out its own private costing of Sanco's proposal. Allowing three minutes for each tagging or check on a number, with labour costs of £12 an hour, Defra calculates the basic cost of the scheme to the average UK sheep farmer at £13-16,000 a year. Their current annual income averages £11,136. There are 67 million sheep movements a year, so copying out all those digits will take 3.35 million hours, totalling £40m. The cost of replacing lost tags alone would be a further £14m. Adding all further costs, such as on-farm record keeping (£8m), Defra's figures conclusively prove that scarcely a single sheep farmer in Britain will be able to afford to stay in business. Yet, if the directive goes through, guess who will be enforcing it more zealously than any other officials in the EU? Yep! It will be Defra's honour and privilege to preside over the final destruction of the industry that built those Cotswold churches.

'Muckspreader'



REMUNERATION NEWS

NEWS from leafy Wimbledon, where the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, the people management experts and registered charity, has joined the fat cat pay debate.

"Legislation to prevent directors receiving excessive compensation payouts is not appropriate. Organisations should be free to pay the best salaries to attract, keep and motivate the best people," it believes.

Well, it would say that, wouldn't it. The CIPD's director-general Geoffrey Armstrong is one of the highest paid charity bosses around, with a salary of £261,000, plus £16,000 benefits and a £69,000 contribution to his pension – a remuneration package of £346,000.

Other staff pensions are apparently funded to the tune of 15 percent, but in true fat cat style the director-general got a 25 percent pension boost. Advantage Armstrong.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

PERHAPS inspired by Manuel in *Fawlty Towers*, "I know nothing" is becoming a stock response among managers in Brussels' ivory towers.

For some time the European commission's Eurostat statistics division has been under investigation by OLAF, the European Union's anti-fraud office, over allegations concerning an unofficial bank account.

Nevertheless budget commissioner Michaele Schreyer says she knew nothing about problems with Eurostat when the European parliament approved the EU's accounts for 2001 in March this year.

At the end of June, the commission's secretary-general David O'Sullivan, who is told when OLAF starts investigations, said he did not necessarily pass this information on to commissioners. He said this was because it might look as if the commission were trying to interfere with the fraud unit's work. MEPs in Strasbourg were not happy with this explanation.

Paul van Buitenen, in his book *Blowing the Whistle*, notes that commissioners under Jacques Santer felt wrongly punished when the roof fell in because they had "done nothing wrong". They felt that the collegiate approach "one for all, all for one" did not apply to them. More to the point, they did not need to know what was going on around the corner. The commission fell just the same.

TRADITIONAL MODERN HUNTING SCENE

EYE TV

Drop The Celebrity (ITV1)
Celebrity Florist (ITV1)
Celebrities Behaving Badly (Sky One)
Celebrities Uncensored (E!)

IT'S said sadly by luvvies that – at the final performance of some turkey of a production that's been playing to empty houses –the auditorium will always be full. Some attribute this to friends of the author and actors loyally turning up for the last rites. A more sinister interpretation is that this sudden final rush is car-crash culture: viewers who enjoy watching a disaster playing out.

If so, audiences for celebrity telly should soar shortly before disappearing from the screen completely. Because, my god, if ever a dog has had its day, it's this one. In a classic example of executives over-commissioning a genre, shows about the famous are becoming notorious.

Drop The Celebrity – in which forgotten TV faces are thrown out of an aeroplane — is further proof of two reliable rules of television. Number one: if a programme idea in any genre starts to sound like the kind of spoof show a satirist might invent, that format is in trouble. And number two: artforms in trouble have a Freudian way of signalling it in the title so that novels called *It Can Only Get Better* are generally unreliable and plays called *Going On Forever* close after two performances.

Drop The Celebrity spectacularly passes both those tests. Nonentity sky-diving might work for about five minutes in a Guy Jenkin or Andy Hamilton satire of tabloid TV but, over 60 minutes of ITV1 peak-time, you're soon laughing at the schedulers and advertisers rather than the contestants. And the title almost spookily alludes to the desperate descent of celebrity television as a form.

Add to that that the most dramatic bit – that bird from Buck's Fizz breaking her ankle – had been well previewed in the press and it's little surprise that, shortly after transmission, ITV1 announced its worst-ever viewing figures.

The big switch-off was unlikely to be halted by **Celebrity Florist**. While *Drop The Celebrity* had at least worked as an idea for five minutes, this one was in trouble before the opening titles. Attempting to fill an hour of television with hints about the kinds of arrangements Joan Collins favours and which blooms Elton spends his money on, this programme was presumably commissioned with the idea of saying to viewers: isn't it amazing that the famous even have their own florist? Unfortunately, the viewers reaction was more likely to be: isn't it amazing that there's someone in television who thinks that there's a programme in the fact that mega-stars have a dedicated flower-stall?

"I hate 'reality' TV – bring back the Christians and lions"

What such programmes represent is a cynical assumption by schedulers that the mere word "celebrity" in a title will increase the audience. As it happens, research shows that there is a word which always raises ratings: sex. But that's because the s-noun almost guarantees some tit and bum shots, while the c-adjective might mean that you simply get footage of Shannon Doherty in a strop or Jean-Claude Van Damme the worse for drink: which is the kind of stuff on which shameless compilations such as **Celebrities Behaving Badly** and **Celebrities Uncensored** are built.

'Remote Controller'

NZ reality show for Barrymore?

With his UK television career dead in the water, troubled entertainer Michael Barrymore is looking to make his big TV comeback with a new reality series in New Zealand.

C21 Newsfeed

MEDIA NEWS

WEEK seven in the *Big Brother* house, and the show continues to provide page after page of newspaper coverage, largely devoted to how no one is interested in it any more.

But for all the doom-mongering among credulous hacks with a hotline to the Channel 4 press office, ratings remain consistent with last year's series, and considerably above those of the first two. Its average audience, around the five million mark, is double what Channel 4 usually expects even for its most popular programmes, and on 30 June the show even drew level with ITV during Saturday night prime-time.

What *is* causing panic at Horseferry Road is a massive downturn in the number of people who can be bothered to "interact" with the show by voting contestants out. Last year newly-installed text facilities, alongside the usual phonelines and digital voting services, earned some £8m for the station. This year there have been on average 40 percent fewer votes cast in the weekly evictions and the bank balance looks a lot less healthy.

The obvious reason is that viewers are suffering from interactivity fatigue: post-*Pop Idol,* every second programme from *This Morning* to *Tonight* now demands participation in a viewer poll, competition or other premium-rate scam, and the great British phone bill-payers have simply had enough. But to admit this would mean confessing that almost every programme "concept" that has been commissioned in the last two years – many of which haven't even appeared yet – has been a horrible, greedy, short-sighted mistake.

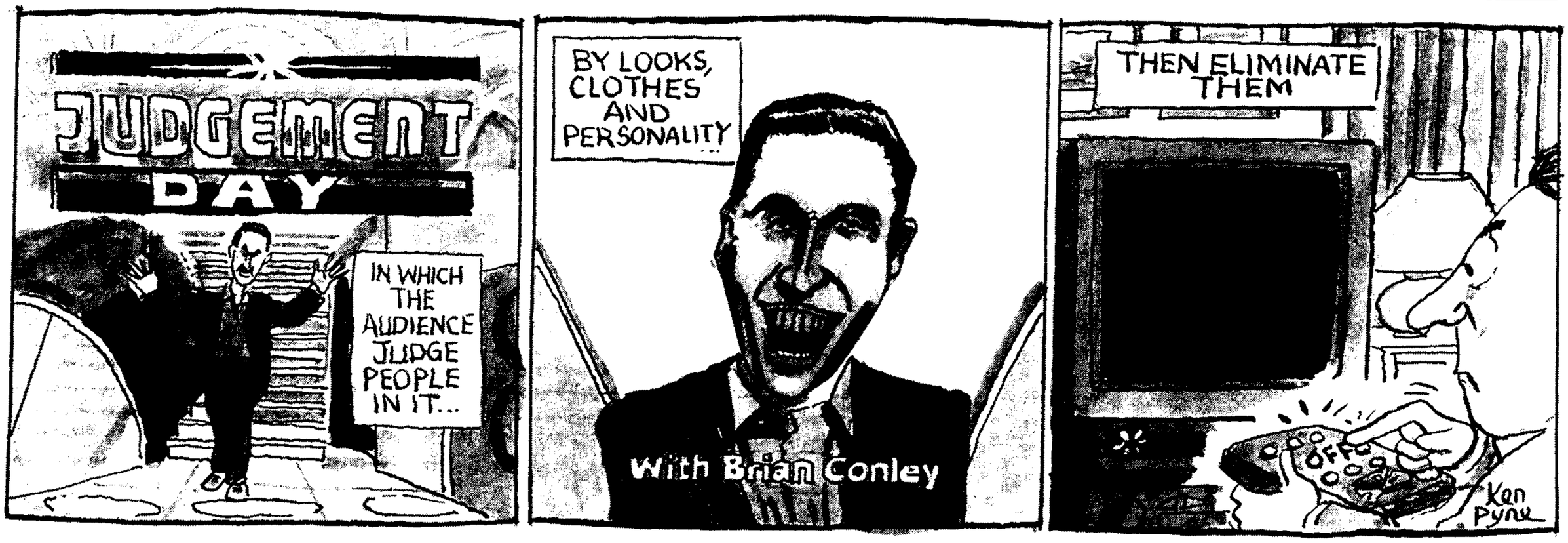
So instead Channel 4 has blamed the housemates, and instructed producer Endemol to inject a bit of life into *Big Brother* in any way possible. Enter Lisa, a Welsh wannabe who declares her "ultimate dream would be to be a soap actress", whose mother claims she would do anything to get on television, and who is quite happy to claim to be transexual in the knowledge that the tabloids (encouraged by the programme's PR team) will go wild. In other words, exactly the sort of fame-seeker Channel 4 told the producers to avoid like the plague this year, claiming it was time for the programme to go "back to basics".

Enraged Endemol staff have lost no time in pointing out that the only reason the show has been so boring this time around is that they delivered exactly what they were asked for.

UK HISTORY continues to scale new heights of inaccuracy.

Combat at Sea on 30 June examined the Second World War battle of Leyte Gulf in which the splendid Japanese battleship Yamato took part. Alas, every single picture of her was wrong. Sometimes she had two funnels, sometimes one; occasionally triple gun turrets, sometimes dual; four turrets, then three.

For good measure film of her sister ship, the Musashi, sinking was illustrated once again by footage of the tragic destruction of HMS Barham.



"That unless we hear from Mr Alastair Campbell by 11 o'clock this morning we will be in a state of war..."

DUMB BRITAIN

The Weakest Link, BBC2

Anne Robinson: Which month in the Gregorian calendar is named after Augustus Caesar?

Contestant: June.

AR: Name the doctor who founded children's homes and orphanages in Britain in the late 19th century.

Contestant: Dr Doolittle.

AR: Which D is an area of Holland famous for its distinctive pottery?

Contestant: Denmark.

AR: What item of photographic equipment has the same name as the private chamber of a judge?

Contestant: Tripod.

"WE have stopped the peak-time decline and in many ways revitalised and renewed it." So said ITV's joint chief executive Clive Jones on 27 June. But who was he kidding?

A week later ITV suffered its worst loss of market share ever, recording a catastrophic 3.3m audience for a Saturday peak time. A spokesman blamed the haemorrhage on "very good weather" and described it as "a blip" due to BBC's coverage of Wimbledon.

SPLIT personalities

Bob Moore

Craig David Beckham

ONE reason tickets for festivals like Glastonbury sell out on the day of release is that they are bought up on behalf of a growing number of online ticket touts who then sell them on to fans at grossly inflated prices.

But even paying these extortionate rates is no guarantee of getting a ticket, it seems. Back in April, for example, when Isle of Wight rock fan Tim Bailey was unable to get a Glastonbury weekend ticket at the official price of £110, he paid £278 to the Online Ticket Shop for a ticket advertised as "now available".

Alas, no ticket was available for Mr Bailey and at the time of writing a very disappointed Mr Bailey was still waiting for his money back.

IT'S not every day a government announces a boycott of all BBC reporters and producers, refuses interviews, forces expulsions of staff and nixes press accreditation. But when Israel joined Zimbabwe and North Korea in late June, there appear to have been as many jaws on the floor at the Israeli embassy in W8 as at Broadcasting House.

Israel's outrage at BBC World's decision to broadcast an acclaimed *Correspondent* special (after a three-month delay) makes the British government's current Dossiergate snit with the Beeb look positively friendly. "Israel's Secret Weapon", an investigation of Israel's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programmes by veteran reporter Olenka Frenkiel, was dropped from BBC2 schedules in March to make way for a Fred Dibnah programme and shunted to an unadvertised graveyard slot the following night, prompting an unprecedented 4,000-odd complaints.

However, the Israeli government press office was vexed that it was screened at all. Press flunkey Danny Seaman told the *Times* last week: "The BBC will discover that bureaucracy can be applied with goodwill or without it... There is no dialogue between Israel and the BBC."

Even the *Telegraph*'s hyper pro-Israel Barbara Amiel (who described the documentary as "specious" and making Hamas look like the Girl Guides), commented that deliberately making life difficult for BBC hacks might be a *bit* over the top.

Back in the UK, the Israeli embassy's press secretary, Shulie Davidovitch, was caught napping by the change in line when asked if she would ever boycott a journalist. "No," she replied, "I'm against boycotts. I'm always in favour of dialogue, of relations. What would you gain? I mean, to boycott someone is racism."

So the BBC's Israel team may find themselves having to call London for answers until the press team in Jerusalem get over their fit of pique.

GREG Dyke's "Big Brainstorm", in which hundreds of non-programme-making staff spent an entire day coming up with an idea that had already been commissioned, has spawned a new initiative.

A whopping £10m of licence-payers' money has been ring-fenced by director of television Jana Bennett to "find the exploding cherries on the icing on the cake" and come up with a "big idea".

How about the idea of commissioning programmes from the people you employ to make them?

ITN BALLS

ITN's use of a picture of West Ham's Jermain Defoe to illustrate a story about the death of the Cameroon player Marc-Vivien Foé was not the only tasteless gaffe to air that day.

Lauren Taylor, autocue-reader for ITN's so-called "News" Channel, announced the death thus: "Cameroon striker Marc-Vivien Foé has dropped dead on the field after his heart stopped." Then she moved straight to the next item: "Moving on now, and researchers have announced a new pill that they say will cut the risk of heart attacks and strokes by up to 80 percent."

ITN's review of the day's press was no less spectacular. A review of the *Mirror* featured pictures of the previous day's paper. And a look at the *Daily Mail* produced a picture of the *Sun* from the day before.

Number crunchings

600 ■ Number of journalists embedded with US forces in Iraq to cover war

■ Number of UK journalists sent to Madrid to cover David Beckham's medical and signing

O·B·N

Unlike star correspondents and presenters such as Andrew Marr, John Humphrys and John Simpson, Richard Sambrook has built his career behind the scenes.

But in the last few days, he has shown he is their match in terms of courage under fire and robustness in the face of government pressure.

Attacked with almost unprecedented ferocity by the government's director of communications, Mr Sambrook has not only withstood the blows but delivered some withering rejoinders of his own.

TORIN DOUGLAS
in a "profile" of his boss, the BBC Director of News, BBC Online

SUPERMODELS

KERBER

APPARENTLY WE'RE IN DANGER FROM OVER-EATING AND PASSIVE SMOKING!
HMMM.... THE FUMES REALLY DO ANNOY ME
YEAH... IT'S HORRIBLE BEING A PASSIVE EATER!
EATING SHOULD BE BANNED!!!
CHIPS

SIGNAL FAILURES

If it's broke, don't fix it

"NEW" Labour is sticking with its right-wing dogma about the railways despite a torrent of bad news.

In the past few weeks alone it's been reported that: nearly 10 percent of trains will still be running late in 10 years' time; Network Rail needs £12bn more than planned over five years; NR has given directors £1m in bonuses; NR and Virgin will shed staff to cut costs; Connex will lose its last franchise; Virgin is getting a £282m bailout this year for its two franchises; more trains will be axed in a desperate bid to cut delays; delays increased in the first quarter of this year (*after* some trains were axed to cut delays); and Europe's highest rail fares will rise faster than inflation to pay for the shambles.

Clearly transport secretary Alistair Darling has failed to keep rail out of the news – hardly surprising after he did nothing to restructure the knackered railway.

The Connex news did raise a rare cheer from passengers: at last the "strategic" rail authority had shown there was a limit to its generosity for pisspoor train operators. But passengers on other failed franchises shouldn't raise their hopes. The SRA was motivated not by compassion for Connex commuters but by contractual issues, especially the urgent need to organise express commuter services over the Chunnel rail link from 2007. Connex is more punctual than five other south-east commuter operations, worst being Stagecoach's South West Trains franchise – which the SRA has extended. (Connex was fined £7m for poor performance and overcrowding in 2002-3; SWT was fined nearly £11.5m – more than any other operator.) Despite its failings, Connex is shortlisted by the SRA for the Trans-Pennine franchise.

The SRA insists another private franchisee will take over in Kent. So no renationalisation, no going "backwards"… and no going forwards either to the stability every rail system needs. Ever since the Tories hatched the daft franchise concept the railway has been in flux with some franchisees demanding extensions, most breaching their contract terms, many given unwarranted bailouts, some franchises terminated early and others undergoing boundary changes or stop-gap extensions. New franchise deals are taking years and millions of pounds to conclude. It's a great job-creation scheme for bureaucrats and lawyers but a disaster for passengers and taxpayers.

● Last week, Connex chief executive Olivier Brousse said, "I am shocked by the SRA decision, particularly for our staff who worked tirelessly to run this railway as best as they could." Connex has, of course, always been concerned about its staff. Last year it became the first rail operator to fall foul of the whistleblower's charter. It was ordered to pay damages to train driver Laurie Holden after having forced him out of his job for repeatedly raising concerns over safety.

SRA boss Richard Bowker, who prefers to ignore BR's superior efficiency (*Eye* 1067), rewrote history last month when introducing a strategy for the west-coast mainline. "British Rail was unable to face up to the huge challenge of renewing the West Coast," wrote Bowker, former co-chairman of Virgin Rail. "Without the vision of Railtrack, the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising and Virgin, in 1996, there would be no modernisation of this vital rail artery of the scale now underway."

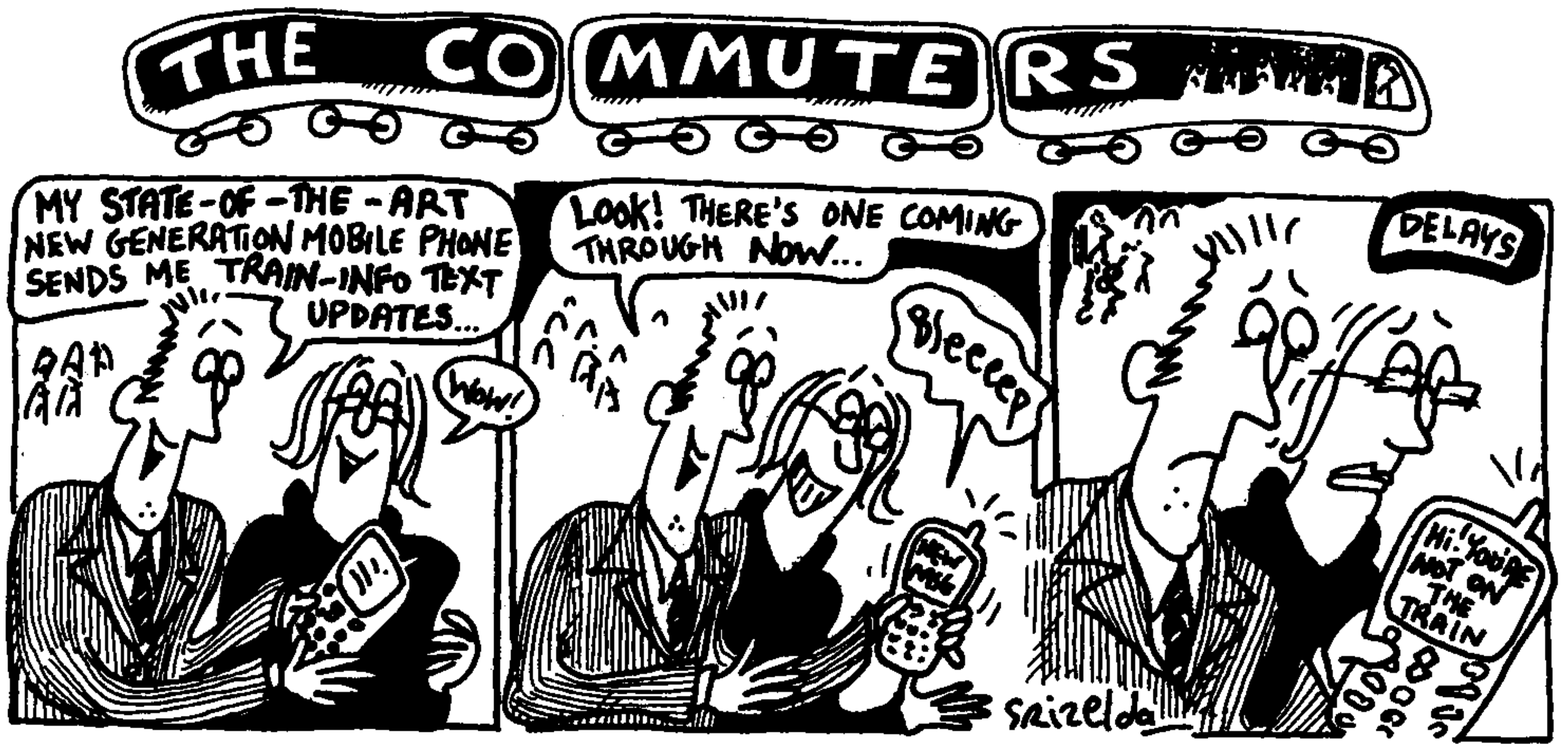
BR never had difficulty facing up to renewing the route: it routinely renewed track and there were no temporary speed restrictions when BR handed the line to Railtrack in 1994. The Tories told BR to drop its modernisation scheme in 1992 because privatisation was more important. BR had recently modernised the east-coast mainline (out of King's Cross) on time and to budget. By contrast, the "vision" of Railtrack, Opraf and Virgin was such a pipedream that the infrastructure work is years late and five times the original budget despite key elements (eg 140mph services) being abandoned. Virgin is being compensated with huge wads of public cash for the failure of its "vision".

Clear as mud

"Responsibilities are now clear. The SRA is the client for the project… Network Rail is responsible for the safe and efficient delivery of the infrastructure elements of this strategy. The Rail Regulator has worked closely with the SRA and Network Rail, and will determine its efficient cost, assess the impact on track access charges and monitor and secure compliance with Network Rail's licence obligations, and approve or direct the terms of access agreements permitting train operators to use the route."

— Richard Bowker's foreword to the west-coast mainline strategy, June 2003.

'Dr B. Ching'



DOING THE ROUNDS

Trouble in the East

"THIS research was unacceptable in any civilised country." So concluded a Singaporean government inquiry into the actions of researchers at the National Neuroscience Institute, headed by British neurologist Professor Simon Shorvon.

Shorvon was sacked in April after the inquiry concluded that the study he was in charge of had infringed patients' rights, breached confidentiality, disregarded their dignity and exposed them to risks without suitable assessment. When Shorvon and his assistants failed to recruit sufficient patients with Parkinson's disease, they obtained lists of patients from two hospitals. They recruited 127 patients by calling them directly, bypassing their neurologists. The patients' neurologists were not informed of the tests that were done, which in many cases included altering their treatment.

Patients were tested for Parkinson's disease by an L-dopa test, which usually involved missing one or two doses before testing of motor function. This is a legitimate approach, since 20 percent of patients with Parkinson's disease are misdiagnosed, but can be harmful and has to be done with full consent. Alas, the consent forms signed by the patients made no mention of the L-dopa test, during which several patients were videotaped. Members of the study's ethics committee also testified that they were unaware of the tests. The inquiry also found that 62 patients' drug doses were altered without explaining why or telling their GPs.

Shorvon's research assistant and doctoral student Mr Ramachandran Viswanathan was singled out for especially harsh criticism by the panel; but instead of refuting the claims, he has gone into hiding in India and extradition procedures for a charge of attempted culpable homicide have begun. Meanwhile, Shorvon conceded in a letter to the inquiry panel: "I accept the report and the findings therein" and promptly returned back to England where he has been reinstated in his previous job at the Institute of Neurology at University College London.

The university is carrying out its own investigation of the allegations and the Medical Protection Society defending Shorvon has revealed he has changed his tune. "Although he initially accepted the inquiry's report and its conclusions it was under exceptional circumstances and there is a great deal in the report that he is contesting." Shorvon has always denied a supplementary report from the panel which accused him of tampering with patients' records while visiting the offices of the solicitors advising the panel. The Singapore police are currently investigating these. His colleague, Professor Nick Wood, also of UCL's Institute of Neurology, was also involved in the research but refused to answer the inquiry panel's questions. He maintains he did not help to formulate the study protocol.

With vast sums ploughed into clinical research, the pressure is immense to get results and the temptation to cut corners is huge. Most bad research is never uncovered, but Shorvon's future is now in the hands of UCL. Whether it will have learned the lessons of Bristol and Alder Hey or consider it a little bit of local difficulty in the East remains to be seen.

M.D.

off your trolley

REEVE & WAY

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

BUNG TO RIGHTS

A JUDGE has urged police to investigate corruption allegations at Milton Keynes council after the collapse of a court case brought by the council against a local taxi driver (see *Eye* 1081).

Driver Dennis Edwards, who for six years has conducted a leaflet campaign alleging that council officers took backhanders which resulted in extra work going to a taxi firm controlled by Glasgow-based gangsters, faced 10 charges of harassment and sending malicious communications. Deputy district judge Geoffrey Wicks found that Edwards' leaflets were "not merely lewd and offensive but were grossly offensive and indecent". But he threw out the charges against him after a series of defence witnesses told the court that bribery was routine in the taxi licensing department.

Retired policeman James McNeil, who worked as a taxi enforcement officer, said one taxi boss asked for his bank details so that a "bung" of £1,000 a month could be paid. The offer was made in front of McNeil's boss, Bob Brill, who didn't bat an eyelid. (McNeil, only three days into the job at the time, told the taxi operator to "piss off".) Alec Patterson, proprietor of Ace Cabs, said Brill had told him how he "liked a tickle". Tony Lane, the retired chief licensing officer for neighbouring South Northants council, told the court: "I was being offered so many bribes that I stopped recording them."

The judge said that on the evidence he had heard "there is no warrant to conclude that there is truth in the allegations of corruption made against Mr Brill". And, though he concluded that Edwards' conduct had been "unpleasant and inappropriate… I cannot find that [it] amounted to improper harassment".

Edwards, who received death threats before the case, welcomes the verdict but wants any police investigation to be carried out by an outside force – Milton Keynes police, he claims, not having acted on the information he has provided over the years. *Eye* 1081 revealed that Raffles Private Hire, the firm at the heart of the case, is controlled by Robert Roden and David Deans, convicted criminals with close links to Tam McGraw, aka "The Licensee", who is believed by police to be Scotland's wealthiest criminal.

PS: In a second hearing last week Milton Keynes magistrates awarded Dennis Edwards £2,050 costs against MK council over his appeal against the suspension of his licence. The bench awarded costs "because we do not necessarily feel that the department acted honestly, reasonably or properly".

● **MIDDLESBROUGH'S elected mayor Ray "Robocop" Mallon introduced a novel system last year – he insisted that councillors should back up their expenses claims with receipts. In the first year of the scheme councillors' exes claims fell by 38.6 percent, or £35,453, compared with the previous year. Just fancy that.**

EDUCASHUN EDUCASHUN EDUCASHUN

WHAT should Skidrow-on-Sea's hung council do with the troubled former Stanley Deason secondary school which serves Brighton's notorious Whitehawk estate?

Under the government's "fresh start" scheme, Stanley Deason became "Marina High" in 1999. Alas, a second fresh start was soon needed, and the school was re-renamed, preposterously, as the "East Brighton College of Media Arts" – or Comart. Critics said it was appropriate the acronym sounded like a supermarket, for it was likely that a career in shelf-stacking was the only one pupils could look forward to.

Stressed staff regularly resigned, there was mass truancy, parents moved heaven and earth to avoid sending their children there, heads came and went. Even a salary of £80,000 wasn't enough to attract anybody to run the place. Now Brighton and Hove council wants to close it.

No simple matter. The school was refurbished and maintained by Jarvis under a private finance initiative deal based on there being 850 pupils. It currently has scarcely half that; and should its use change, Jarvis will have to be compensated to the tune of many hundreds of thousands of pounds. This will be tricky given the council's debts.

WS ATKINS is in such a hurry to stop running Southwark's education service that an embarrassing deal with the local newspaper, the *Southwark News*, for full page colour ads telling readers what a good job the firm is doing is destined to run until the end of July when the firm will effectively do a runner.

Last month the 19 June edition carried a full-page ad, looking suspiciously like a news story, with the headline "Southwark school gets Gold award" – a story about a primary school which received something called an Artsmark Gold award from the Arts Council for encouraging children to take an interest, er, arts. Nor is there any clue to the perilous state of Southwark's education service on the remainder of the page, which carries an article about another primary school which is to teach children forgotten playground songs. Meanwhile the paper's news pages have chronicled the real story of the unfolding education fiasco.

Over in the town hall, Southwark's executive member for education Bob Skelly put the cat among the pigeons by confirming that Crapita is in the running to take over from Atkins in the interim, as are Mouchel Consulting Ltd. The latter was set up in August 2000 as an off-shoot of construction firm Mouchel, which manages 2,000 miles of the UK's motorways and trunk roads – a bit like WS Atkins, in fact.

Meanwhile the Tory leader in Southwark, Kim Humphreys, has jumped into bed with the unions and the Socialist Alliance and called for the education service to be run by an in-house team. The current favoured long-term solution is a not-for-profit trust in the mould of Hackney's.

Last week it emerged that the department for education and skills (DfES) has told Southwark it will be expected to make up any financial shortfall resulting from Atkins' early withdrawal, which could amount to around £1.5m. Southwark says this breaks a promise by former education secretary Estelle Morris that the borough would not suffer financially in any public/private partnership. The council has gone into a huff and called off negotiations over the future of the LEA until the threat is withdrawn. Roll on the holidays!

"It's a beacon school"

KEEN *Eye* readers may recall the disgraceful story of the sacking of Oliver Butterworth as artistic director of the London Schools Symphony Orchestra (LSSO), despite an excellent record for the orchestra and for the Centre for Young Musicians.

Mr Butterworth and his wife Julia were victims of a silly and disreputable campaign against them supported by London's lead council, Westminster. The campaign had been vigorously denounced as "outrageous and nauseating" in a letter to the Corporation of London from Sir Colin Davis, the celebrated conductor.

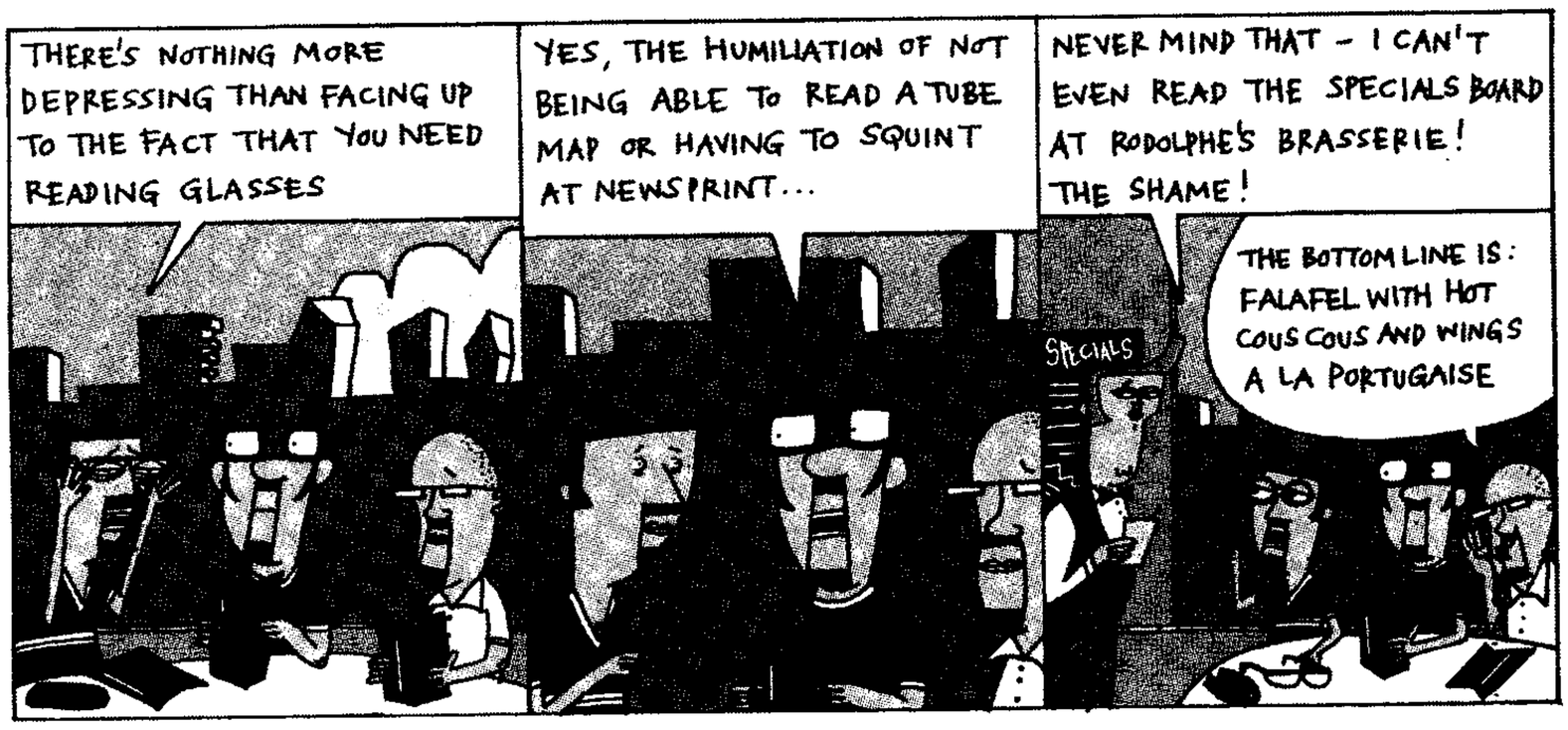
Last November *Eye* 1068 revealed that the "independent adjudicator" at the Westminster council hearings into the case was John Harris, Westminster's director of education. At great expense, Mr Butterworth sued the council for unfair dismissal. At first the council refused even to offer a settlement. Then it offered a derisory sum, which was rejected. In May, it offered to pay a much larger sum which Mr Butterworth accepted.

So the council's "outrageous and nauseating" behaviour will never be exposed in public, and the case has been settled at considerable cost to Westminster council taxpayers.

Depute Director £82,983
EDUCATION SERVICES (Performance + Planning)
Glasgow City Council

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON

KNIFE & PACKER


THERE'S NOTHING MORE DEPRESSING THAN FACING UP TO THE FACT THAT YOU NEED READING GLASSES
YES, THE HUMILIATION OF NOT BEING ABLE TO READ A TUBE MAP OR HAVING TO SQUINT AT NEWSPRINT...
NEVER MIND THAT - I CAN'T EVEN READ THE SPECIALS BOARD AT RODOLPHE'S BRASSERIE! THE SHAME!
SPECIALS
THE BOTTOM LINE IS: FALAFEL WITH HOT COUS COUS AND WINGS A LA PORTUGAISE

POT AND KETTLE NEWS

CAPITA executive chairman Rod Aldridge has laid into Britain's public services. "For too many public bodies, poor customer service is still the acceptable norm. If it were your bank or your phone company, these inefficiencies would not be acceptable. You'd just take your business elsewhere."

For those who have suffered and continue to suffer because of Crapita's pisspoor services – the criminal records bureau fiasco is but the latest in a string of central and local government services fouled up by the company (*Eyes passim ad nauseam*) – this is a bit rich as, sadly, there is no other place to "take your business".

NOOKS and CORNERS

THERE is a handful of British architects of genius (not many — and certainly none living) whose every work, however minor, deserves respect. One is Wren, another Hawksmoor, another Soane perhaps; and another, surely, is Sir Edwin Lutyens, architect of the Cenotaph and Viceroy's House, New Delhi, and the designer of some of the most ravishing houses ever built in these islands.

His sense of geometry and felicitous attention to detail was such that he could make even a garden seat or mere wall a work of art. Such things, however, do not always conform to the criteria used by the semi-trained bureaucrats who police our architectural heritage.

I am thinking in particular of Lutyens's work at The White Lodge on the Cliff at Roedean, Sussex, which he enlarged and altered for Victoria, Lady Sackville, in 1923-26. Lady Sackville was one of the most interesting and certainly the most tantalising of the clients who became his friends. The biographies of most architects are pretty dull, but Lutyens's is enlivened by the advent of this glamorous, half-Spanish illegitimate daughter of one Lord Sackville and the estranged wife of another, with whom she managed to produce a daughter, the writer Vita Sackville-West.

For a time Lutyens and Lady Sackville – 'McNed' and "McSack" as they archly called each other – were very close. McNed had a typically Edwardian, frustrating marriage to Lady Emily Lytton, a prim Theosophist; and despite tiffs and tantrums McSack provided consolation at a difficult time in his life.

Did they or didn't they? is the question Jane Ridley can't definitively answer in her new life of Lutyens. But no matter: McSack gave McNed a Rolls Royce, complete with chauffeur, and the architect enjoyed himself making designs for his exciting friend's several houses before she ran out of money and marbles.

White Lodge was originally a house built in 1903 for Frances Martineau, a founder of Roedean School. The architect for both was Sir John Simpson, who with Maxwell Ayrton and Owen Williams went on to design Wembley Stadium. Lady Sackville bought the house in 1923 and Lutyens soon showed her how to improve it. After much argument, Lutyens altered the house, added two symmetrical wings and created an enchanting sunken garden.

After the Second World War, The White Lodge on the Cliff was gratuitously spoiled. The house was divided up into flats and the windows were altered. Even so, although it escaped wider attention, the basic form of the house survived intact, as did the garden terraces and the sunken garden. Until last year.

In 1999 the east wing with its loggia was bought by a Mr Vasse, a local builder. Cheerfully regardless of his dismayed neighbours, Mr Vasse decided to improve his property and has smashed through a picture window, added a brick extension, replaced Lutyens's roof tiles by bright green pantiles and generally buggered up what was once a serious piece of architecture. And all with the acquiescence of the planning department of Brighton 'n' Hove city council.

Of course The White Lodge ought to have been listed years ago. But despite the support of the Lutyens Trust, the Twentieth Century Society and the Victorian Society, as well as flat-owners in the house, recent attempts to get the house protected were rebuffed by inspectors from English Heritage, who decided the alterations made it unlistable.

Yet the damage of UPVC windows is easily reversible and the interiors are still interesting, while Mr Vasse's improvements have uncovered murals commissioned by Lady Sackville, including an embellished London to Brighton road map painted by Frank Moss Bennett. And now it is probably too late.

What is most culpable is the philistine behaviour of Brighton council. Even though Vasse's east wing is an integral part of an originally symmetrical architectural unity, Brighton's legal advisers decided that his element constituted a "single dwelling" and that he could therefore do what he liked with it within statutory limits. Thus a unique creation by a very great architect and his mistress has been gratuitously wrecked.

The treatment of The White Lodge is not unusual in Brighton, whose sea-front is ruined by grotesquely bad new hotels, the Brighton Centre, and many other vulgar developments while the skyline of the Regency city is spoiled by crass tower blocks. And still they want more.

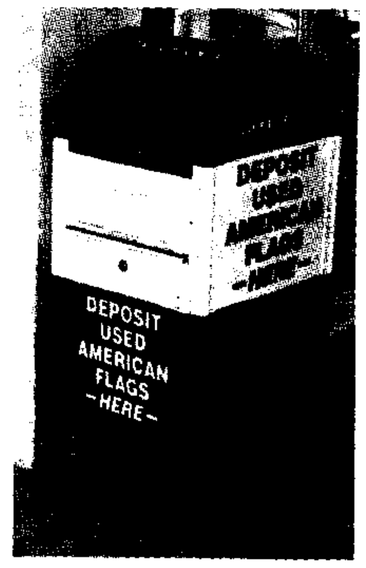
The proposals for the King Alfred site on the seafront at Hove – including huge scrunched-up 38 storey wobbly towers by modish superstar Frank Gehry – were no April Fool joke. There is serious backing for a (yawn) "Bilbao Effect" development as part of what the leader of Brighton 'n' Hove council, Ken Bodfish, calls "perhaps the most prestigious coastal development in Britain." No doubt the council will be as flexible over planning restrictions here as it has been in Roedean.

'Piloti'

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS

BY BIRCH

Damien's gone too far—Jesus and the apostles represented by ping-pong balls on fountains of red wine around a formica table.
Talk about bad taste!
—ARTS—
HIRST'S "LAST SUPPER" TO BE SHOWN IN LONDON
HOMAGE TO LEONARDO DA VINCI
I dunno—I've heard that formica's making a come-back.
Really?



I-SPY

Southern California

Submitted by Anon
£10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs.)*

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

THE people of Aldeburgh in Suffolk, most of whom seem to be retired air-commodores with wives called Daphne, have never had an entirely comfortable relationship with the great musician who put their small seaside town on the map.

Keen as the Aldeburgh Daphnes are to tell you how they knitted pullovers for "dear Ben" or how "dear Peter" loved their elderberry cordial, the commodores still take a dim view of the whole thing and suspect the Aldeburgh Festival (not without reason) of harbouring a nest of sissies. Which is presumably why the tourist information board on the seafront tacks Britten like an after-thought to its advertised list of local worthies, describing him with fabulous understatement as "the talented composer"; and why there remains no physical memorial to him, beyond a window in the parish church.

Some years ago, when various bodies lobbied for a statue, the town council said it would rather spend the money on a bird-bath. Nevertheless, the issue hasn't gone away; and at the 2003 Aldeburgh Festival last month it was – apart from some disastrous bits of programming – *the* hot debate in post-performance circles.

The distinguished painter/sculptor Maggie Hambling has designed and perhaps prematurely begun to make an abstract memorial to Britten, which she wants to erect on the beach at a cost of £60,000. Unfortunately no one seems to want it, still less pay for it. And if it ever gets planning consent – which, judging from correspondence in the local press, will be fiercely opposed – it will probably be banished to a bleak stretch of coastline to the north of the town where no one will see it and it will soon (with luck, murmur the commodores) get vandalised.

But as the town unites in its hostility to the Britten *hommage*, it's rallying to the support of an alternative piece of public sculpture: namely "Snooks", a dog who was owned by a local doctor and was so dear to the townsfolk they honoured it with a statue on a plinth beside the Moot Hall. Snooks was popular. He didn't fill the town with festivals and noise and arty-farty friends. He wasn't a sissie (so far as anyone could tell). And though he liked small boys, he had never been known to sleep with them as talented composers apparently do. So when he was recently stolen at dead of night from his plinth, the town went into mourning. A forlorn sign denouncing the theft now stands in Snooks's empty place.

The good news is that the town council has been overwhelmed by gifts of money for Snooks' restoration. And as the original cast still exists, it should only cost a couple of thousand. Better value than a Maggie Hambling.

The other good news is that no one has as yet proposed a statue to Aldeburgh's latest talented composer: the young and fashionable Thomas Ades, who is Britten's successor in artistic charge of the festival and who, at 32, already hangs full-length in the National Portrait Gallery.

But if there *were* to be an Ades statue it would at least show the locals what he looks like. During most of this last festival he has been noticed by his absence, far too busy attending to his many lucrative London commissions to spare much time hanging around seaside towns. "Dear Ben", who was devoted to Aldeburgh and despised London, must be turning in his unmemorialised grave.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

"You've got Henmania – but don't worry, it rarely progresses into the final stages"

HIGH PRINCIPALS

HOW do bosses at Motherwell College of Further Education manage to hold on to their positions, despite continually losing tribunals in which they are shown to have mistreated staff?

Lecturers at the college, which has paid out hundreds of thousands of pounds to former staff since 1996, have now passed a vote of no confidence in their management.

Scottish teaching union the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) is calling on the Scottish Executive and the Funding Council to investigate the Lanarkshire college's management after fighting their fourth case in four years for maltreatment of staff at the college. Previous cases included a member of staff fired while on sick leave and a lecturer charged with gross misconduct for going home sick at lunchtime.

Douglas Nicol, the college's EIS branch convenor, was awarded £44,500 after he was demoted because of his involvement in trade union activities. He lost his senior lecturership after failing to obey an instruction from his line manager about splitting a class into two groups. "On no view could it be said to be conduct justifying the label gross misconduct," concluded the tribunal. "No other explanation is possible than that the respondent's purpose was to penalise him for his trade union activities."

The college, one of Scotland's largest with 16,000 students, has seen a series of strikes and walk-outs over staff disciplinaries in the past few years. As well as the four EIS cases, a tribunal in 1999 found that college principal Richard Millham had put pressure on contractors ISS to sack janitor Adam Stewart who accidentally turned out the lights while Millham was still in the building.

THE British Council's *raison d'être* is surely to spread traditional values of fair play, stiff-upper lips and all that around the globe. So its sacking of nine teachers at the Young Learners' Centre in Madrid appears to let the side down.

Tempers have frayed at the centre over a long-running pay dispute. And the sackings followed an article in *Education Guardian* last month about the row (teachers are asking for a 4.5 percent rise after nine years of below inflation pay increases). As a result, summer courses for around 700 students have been cancelled, meaning the centre will lose fees of a 1,000 euros per student.

The centre's managers called off language exams at the end of the summer term, after nine days of teaching strikes since March. The British Council told the *Eye*: "The exams would have been of limited value after the teaching was so disrupted, and if you have a strike, it is very disruptive."

The centre last featured in *Eye* 863 when a member of staff was suspended after pinning up an important health and safety warning on a noticeboard. This time notices have gone up in the college from the trade union committee, suggesting a "disclaimer" over the qualifications of students graded without the proper testing. Staff were warned that following the notice's advice could lead to disciplinary action.

AD NAUSEAM

NESTLE's decision to take its failed bid to turn the phrase "have a break" into a registered trade mark to the court of appeal looks set to turn into yet another PR albatross for the company.

Public disgust at Nestlé's attempt to recover $6m from famine-stricken Ethiopia, only abandoned after near universal condemnation, is still tangible. So too are concerns about the aggressive marketing of formula milk in Third World countries.

But while Nestlé has been locked in an expensive and so far unfruitful legal wrangle with Mars, the phrase "have a break" has been very successfully hijacked by Oxfam. It features in a campaign that draws unwelcome attention to the pisspoor conditions suffered by those coffee farmers whose hard work (for virtually no return) contributed to Nestlé's $5bn profit last year.

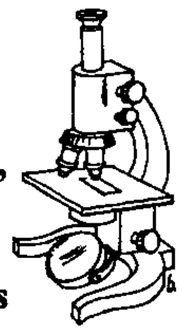
Faced with billboards proclaiming Oxfam's "Live to work and work and work. No break for Nestlé coffee farmers" message, many companies would have looked for a different message altogether.

TOBACCO advertising in UK magazines and other media was banned in February. So the seven pages in August's edition of ageing lad-mag *Maxim* devoted to plugging Benson & Hedges cigarettes must be something else.

The "Maxim F1 Special in ASSOCIATION WITH BENSON & HEDGES JORDAN GRAND PRIX" manages to cram an impressive 94 references to the fag brand among its stats and celebrations of fast cars, including large logos at the top and bottom of every spread and on every box-out, graph and graphic.

The government's tobacco: advertising and promotion act states that anyone who publishes a tobacco ad in the UK can be sent to prison for up to six months. But it also delays a ban on Formula One sponsorship until 2006 (a full nine years after Bernie Ecclestone's £1m donation to Labour), so Felix Dennis, *Maxim*'s publisher (a keen smoker), will probably not be heading for the dock just yet.

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE



"BLACKOUTS in Britain by 2020" said the headlines a few days ago. The Institute of Civil Engineers claimed that with dwindling supplies of gas and coal, and a reliance on dubious countries to supply our energy needs, the UK faces a future in the dark.

So what could rescue us from such a fate? Step forward nuclear power. No one's saying it (yet), but it seems inevitable the government will soon have to come clean and admit that while renewables get the brownie points with the greens, only nuclear will actually keep us warm at night. The future is green, claimed a recent, media-friendly white paper on energy. In fact, future's atomic.

SOME alarm was raised recently at the implications of the new EU clinical trials directive which, senior medics say, will dramatically restrict the opportunities for testing potentially life-saving new treatments and drugs. Medics fear that layers of extra bureaucracy will simply make such trials impossible to carry out. The directive must be part of British law by May next year.

But will it make any difference? The *Eye* understands that Professor Alasdair Breckenridge, chairman of the medicines and healthcare products regulatory agency is, together with the senior civil servant in charge of clinical trials, Dr Brian Davis, working hard to ensure that many of the direst predictions – an end to all publicly-funded trials of new cancer drugs, for example – will not come to pass.

'Boffin'

Letters

Prince of Wails

Sir,

I am appalled at Private Eye cover no 1083. My husband and I – both readers of this magazine for many years – think it is in very bad taste and are wondering whether to renew our annual subscription.

In view of Prince William's 21st birthday appeal for more appreciation of his father, I cannot understand how you could consider this cover in any way clever and amusing.

Yours faithfully,
C.M. YARROW,

Renfrewshire.

Sir,

I have read your organ for some years but am becoming distressed by your treatment of Prince Charles. He is yours and my future king, and is entitled to the respect due to him. You attack our prince who cannot, or will not, defend himself. This makes you merely cowardly. I suppose you realise that your behaviour is treasonable, and could land you in the Tower – but such is our present decadent democracy, it probably won't happen. Lucky you! But you deserve it!

We royalists would prefer that the Queen remains the fount of honour in this country, rather than Tony and Mrs Blair, or people like you. She has served us all well.

Just stop this mean attack on royalty which is unwarranted, defenceless, and may well affect your circulation. Pride comes before a fall.

Just watch it!

PETER F. HILLS,

Tonbridge, Kent.

Sir,

*When are you going to stop twitting the royal family for being who they are? Aren't you coming it a bit strong? I mean, die-hard anti-European **and** republican – where do we go from here? Into the United States of America?*

Yours,
THORBJØRN CAMPBELL,

Via email.

Lookalike

Berlusconi

Shrek

Sir,

Are they related?

Yours,
SCOTT THOMSON,

Edinburgh.

School ties

Sir,

If you cannot get a simple fact like the colour of the Old-Shirburnian tie correct (1083, Dumpster's Diary), how can we possibly have faith in the veracity of that and other articles?

Yours faithfully in black and white,
DAVID TALL (Old De Astonian),

Yelverton.

Hacks at war

Sir,

I do not understand why you have given space to an attack on me and my new book Bent Coppers – the inside story of Scotland Yard's battle against police corruption (Letters, 1083).

Once again the less than dynamic duo Michael Gillard and Laurie Flynn have bent the truth in their letter to you.

For the record, I only wrote to their publishers after Gillard made two false accusations against me. The first of these was a disgusting piece in an Amsterdam-based web magazine, which he then followed up by letter saying unspecified "serious allegations" were being made against me.

Regards,
GRAEME McLAGAN,

London.

(That's enough of this correspondence. Ed.)

Lookalike

Emperor Rudolf

Leigh

Sir,

I've often been struck by how strongly the acclaimed film-maker Mike Leigh resembles Emperor Rudolf II of Austria (1576-1612). It must cause all sorts of problems on set.

Yours,
PETER REAVY,

Belfast.

Mass deception?

Sir,

As an academic, I read with interest an article on a "voluntary vetting scheme" for universities to prevent foreign students learning how to make weapons of mass destruction (Eye 1082).

I was disappointed, however, to learn that nobody in the Kings College London department of pharmacy had received such a message or indeed any circular from the foreign office, ever. A few enquiries to the KCL Maths department and the London School of Pharmacy indicated that they too were excluded from our national duty against the axis of Bush.

Could you possibly tell me which courses and which universities actually received this message or is this a rare example of the Eye being duped?

DAVID WOOD,

Dept. of Pharmacy, Kings College London.

Pig ignorant?

Sir,

Re: Muckspreader (1081 et al). I write as an ex-employee (redundant Pig Unit Manager) of some 25 years experience.

Fact: Smart farmers have known for years that a ban of "on farm disposal of fallen stock" was on the cards. 1986 was the first time I heard of it, and forward-thinking efficient farmers would have invested in relatively inexpensive incinerators, available and demonstrated at trade fairs for donkeys' years. That would require investment in the future though, a dirty concept in so-called modern agriculture.

Fact: Most other industries have to pay dearly for waste disposal and the jettisoning of polluting waste is prohibited by law. Is this good or bad, Muckspreader? Maybe we should go back to steaming, filthy rivers, chemically toxic to wildlife or perhaps the nuclear industry could just bung their by-product in Muckspreader's backyard – no problem there, it doesn't matter.

Fact: I took part in the Pig Campaign some four years ago. Part of the EU-bashing blurb put out to consumers was how kind British farmers didn't keep their animals in crates any more (it neglected farrowing accommodation), unlike the cruel foreigners. The fact that this was due to a piece of EU legislation they were all dragged into compliance with, kicking and screaming after a postponement of five years, was conveniently overlooked.

Fact: Foreign farmers have taken great care to protect their local markets and make greater efforts to market their product for themselves. I warned anyone who would listen that selling our soul to SafeCoyBuys was the first step on a very slippery slope, and once they had us by the balls they would squeeze until the tears appeared – and voilà! (Need I translate for Europhobes?)

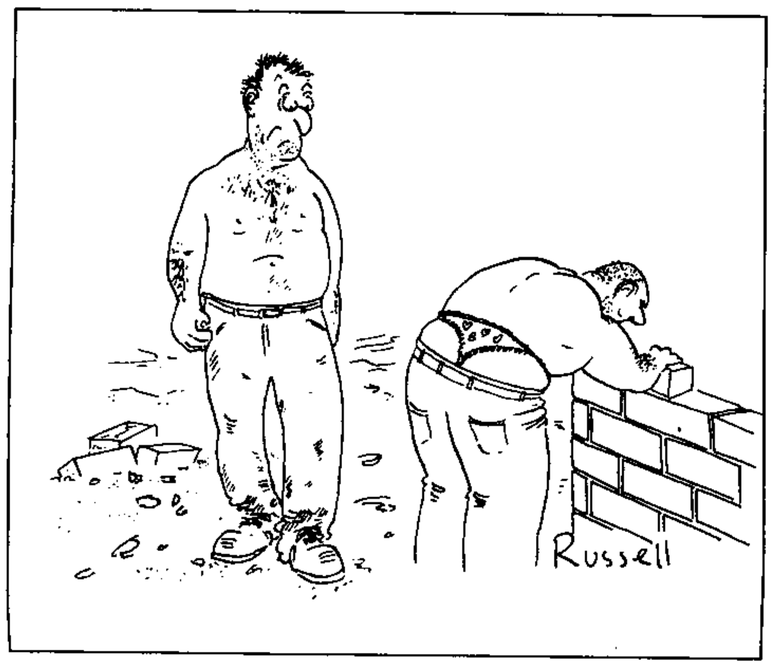
I suggest if Muckspreader wants really to expose the realities of the countryside, he gets his green wellies on and goes talk to some farmworkers who've been disabled in the course of their work, whether it be by chemicals, dust or machinery; or to their widows when they've been booted out of their tied cottage – a home for 40 years.

Maybe he'd like to operate some of the kit in conditions I have over the years (or lose my job and house if I refuse for "shit-stirring"). Fancy pressure-washing in a building when you can see the electricity dancing across the wet ceiling, Mr Muckspreader? Perhaps unblocking a frost-covered feed tank, some 40 feet off the deck, with no safety rail, in wet wellingtons is more to your taste? How about your back drenched in Paraquat from spraying with a crap, leaky knapsack sprayer, day in, day out?

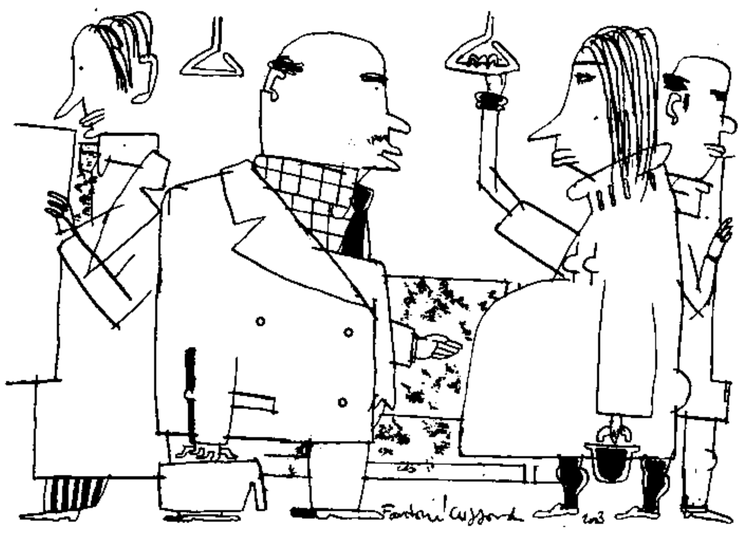
Get real: if you want an exposé agricultural style, I can give you chapter and verse on the corruption, lack of compassion, law-bending and downright bloody dangerous British countryside. It's time British agriculture faced facts and entered the 21st century like other industries who expect to survive, cleaned up and efficient, safe for their workers – or out of business.

Yours rantingly,
STEVE WAKEFIELD,

Bath, Somerset.



Scenes You Seldom See



"You are clearly pregnant, my dear lady – have my seat"

Z-z-z-z-z-armina?

Sir,

Because Eye readers will be rapidly wearying of the Zarmina correspondence, we'll keep this short and sweet with a Mirror-style fact-file:

FACT: Hardcash found the story in the first place, featuring it in our film Beneath the Veil in June 2001.

FACT: The following year, good old Anton and the Mirror decide to follow up the story, and good luck to them.

FACT: Trouble is, they got the wrong picture of Zarmina.

FACT: Anton and his "fixer", far from being any help to our team, were of no use at all.

FACT: But that didn't matter, because we were working with our colleagues from Asia Press, Taku and Eiko, who'd been in Kabul long before the Mirror team, and who got the right picture.

FACT: True, we don't pay cash for our interviews, but we are putting £9,000 into a new school for Afghan children in the north west of the country.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID HENSHAW &
CARLA GARAPEDIAN,

Hardcash Productions.

Piano forte

Sir,

Now that Liverpool has been chosen as European capital of Culture 2008, will Sir Bob Scott ensure that fine examples of recognised culture such as the 1925 Bechstein grand piano (see photo), at present forlornly displayed in the beautiful surroundings of the elegant Adelphi Hotel, be restored to remind us that Liverpool had some culture way back when?

JULIA HAMILTON,

Bromley.

The pits

Sir,

Tony Blair missed the Durham Miners' Gala (Eye 1083). Big deal. I guess a lot of miners did as well, seeing as there's no working pits left in the county. Never mind. Perhaps he'll turn up at the Lancashire Mill-Workers' Carnival?

Regards,
ALAN DIXON,

Via email.

Poll findings

Sir,

It must come as a shock that there should be a pollster like YouGov who gets things right consistently – all six of the "hard outcomes" on which we have polled since we started in 2001 have been remarkably close to the actual result. That's why our clients like us, and why we're doing so well.

May I correct you on some other points: YouGov started polling for the Conservative Party at the end of last year, well before the arrival of my friend Paul Baverstock, so your suggestion that we got the contract because he was there is clearly unfair. And I changed my name to Shakespeare from Kukowski to have the same name as my children, my wife (a genuine Shakespeare) having insisted on keeping hers for herself and our children. I have always been open about my change of name, and indeed my failure of the "Tebbit Test" (I support Germany over England when it comes to football).

You seem surprised that, as pollsters, we should "ask the questions the clients want asked". So long as the question format is fair and legitimate, of course we do. In this regard at least, we're rather conventional.

Yours,
STEPHAN SHAKESPEARE,
Director of Opinion Research, YouGov.

Mouth piece

Sir,

I am glad to see that Downing Street's answer to Comical Ali, Alastair Campbell, is living up to his surname of Campbell which translates from the Gaelic as "Crooked Mouth".

Yours faithfully,
COLIN C.

Via email.

Blinking Eye

Sir,

Come on Eye: don't go all red-top on us, your loyal readers. We buy your organ to learn about the shenanigans, venality and waste in government, business, agriculture, transport, health and education. Should we wish to know about extra-marital affairs and children born "out of wedlock", there are enough prurient tabloids to satisfy us. Are you all so pristine at the Eye that you feel qualified to "cast the first stone"?

Yours severely,
NORMAN FOSTER,
Duxford, Cambs.

Junk male

Sir,

Whilst Barclaycard do indeed over-use junkmail for their marketing purposes, it may not be Mr Potts' dislike of junkmail that led the company to return the mail-out you referred to last issue (1082).

It may be for the slightly less ironic reason that Bob Potts is in fact no longer the Chief Executive of Barclaycard, since handing over the reigns to Gary Hoffman in 2001. Having received a mailing from a company incompetent enough to miss this crucial fact, I think Barclaycard were probably in the right to return the note. Hopefully subscribers to your esteemed organ will be more merciful.

Kind regards,
DAN BARNES,

Via email.

Hello, sailor

Sir,

Diana Fairhill's contribution (re: "going sailing with Katchaturian and Spartacus", Colemanballs, 1083) is perhaps an indication of her youth and, maybe, indicates the target audience for Classic FM. She was possibly too young to stay up and watch evening TV when the "big tune" from this work became part of the popular "classic" repertoire as the theme music for The Onedin Line, a tale of a Liverpool merchant (sailing) line. I guess Classic FM knew that a large number of its audience would understand the reference. Hearing the theme now certainly rekindles my teenage (or maybe later!) yearnings for James Onedin, master of the line.

Wrinklily yours,
MARY WOLF,

Via email.

Wimbleballs

£10 paid for contributions

"She [Serena Williams] played some great shots, but so did I, and that was the only difference."
JENNIFER CAPRIATI, BBC2
(Kari Koonin)

"Let's hope his nerves will run through his veins."
JOHN McENROE, BBC1
(Gareth Hall)

"Henman has made the semi-finals for four of the last five years so his Wimbledon record is second to none."
JEREMY BATES, Today Programme
(Kevin Mansell)

"This poor guy's gonna walk out of here on a stretcher."
JOHN McENROE, BBC1
(Neil Duffy)

Matter of Trust

Sir,

Re: Cliveden (27 June 2003). Did you know that the beautiful cedar tree pictured in your feature is no longer there? This tree – at least 500 years old – was chopped down by the National Trash (Trust) in order to allow more light to enter the very expensive rooms of the very expensive and elite hotel which Cliveden has become? This change of use was despite Lady Nancy Astor's expressed wish in her will (it was she who left Cliveden to the nation) that the house and estate should be used "for the furtherance of good relations between English speaking nations".

Anyone who can ignore such a wish and open an exclusive hotel, cut down a beautiful and ancient tree and put a foot path right across the historic "Duke's Lawn" on which it stood (one of the few original features of the house and commemorating the duel fought there) just so that a lot of rich Nabobs can walk more directly to their hotel lobby, can build anything, anywhere!

Sincerely,
J. POOLE,

Romsey, Hants.

Although the alarm sounded when the robbers broke in, they quickly disabled it, as well as the security cameras, and hid in the lavatory, the only place where there were no motion detectors.

The Times

Blinking Eye

Sir,

Come on Eye: don't go all red-top on us, your loyal readers. We buy your organ to learn about the shenanigans, venality and waste in government, business, agriculture, transport, health and education. Should we wish to know about extra-marital affairs and children born "out of wedlock", there are enough prurient tabloids to satisfy us. Are you all so pristine at the Eye that you feel qualified to "cast the first stone"?

Yours severely,
NORMAN FOSTER,
Duxford, Cambs.

LUVVIES

I stroke my bed in the morning and tell it I will be back...

AMANDA BARRIE
The Times

Submitted by Simon Lanyon.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

HOM SAP

AUSTIN

Letter From **Paris**
from Our Own Correspondent

OUR "Elf" trial is as glorious as a summer day on the Champs Elysées: it's not often we see the Republic's dirty laundry aired like this. But what is the trial, which involves the once omnipotent former state oil company, now privatised and merged with two rivals, about?

On one level it's about suitcases of cash, masonic handshakes, high-class hookers and the Corsican mafia (Elf, remember, bribed and subverted governments across Africa, central Asia, South America, Taiwan and Europe). But at another level it's about "the system" and how, under French law, it's almost impossible to catch a crook who bribes a foreign official.

Instead we can only nab people who "misuse company funds"; and that means Elf employees Alfred Sirven, André Tarallo and Loik le Floch-Prigent. In other words, the little guys. Sirven, famous for swallowing his phone chip after being arrested on an international warrant in the Philippines, has been singing in court like, well, a chicken. He claims to know enough to "blow up the Republic 20 times over" but has done nothing but cluck about his co-defendants.

Despite dark references to the fact that Elf was, for years, a giant slush fund for all our big political parties, the little guys have found it hard to mention the real crooks by name. One of these, former president François Mitterrand, is dead and his legacy has admittedly taken a bit of a battering. But another rogue, the current head of state Jacques Chirac, is very much alive.

Chirac has presidential immunity from standing trial or even being questioned as a witness, although investigating magistrate Philippe Courroye might try to speak to Madame Chirac. Then again, he might not. Our judges have been sent miniature coffins and some have had to hire bodyguards. Their powers, meanwhile, are gradually being shaved back by sneaky new laws.

Before our American and British cousins start to feel too smug, they should remember that their oil companies have form too. Will Mobil (now ExxonMobil), accused of having paid middleman and fixer James Giffen $80m to funnel to Kazakh president Nursultan Nazarbayev and his friends, face the music? Will US vice-president Dick Cheney's pals at Halliburton get more than a slap on the wrist for their role in the disappearance of $180m in a Nigerian liquefied natural gas deal, through a consortium registered in Madeira? (It was our French judges who had to uncover that one, when it was clearly an Anglo-Saxon problem from start to finish.) With your plea-bargaining legal system, which tends to let rich crooks avoid having their dirty laundry aired at all, we doubt these big fish will feel too much heat.

And why is it that although our judges have found their Swiss counterparts cordially agreeing to help us track down Elf's misdeeds, you Brits do not? How could your Iraqi-born billionaire Nadhmi Auchi sit in London and resist extradition for three years, to answer our corruption charges? Only with your help.

Auchi, until recently a major shareholder in Paribas bank, helped Tony Blair put together his "intelligence" on Iraq. Paribas (now BNP Paribas) is also the bank that helped arms dealers and friends at the squeaky-clean oil trader Glencore supply Angolan president Jose Eduardo dos Santos with goodies during the war with Jonas Savimbi's UNITA, while Elf bribed both sides.

And what does Mr Blair know about Arkady Gaidamak, the ex-Soviet "businessman" and frequent visitor over the years to your island, while subject to an international arrest warrant? Arkady also magically helped turn $5bn of Angolan military loans from Moscow into a billion and a half dollars' worth of Angolan oil-backed debt, arranged by, well, Paribas and Glencore. Less than a 30th of the cash has so far found its way to the Russian treasury.

But there is hope for Angola's leaders: another $1bn and more in oil-backed borrowing is in the pipeline. Who could be behind this altruistic operation? Why our very own BNP Paribas.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

"Frankly, we were surprised at the fuss the policy caused," the Head Keeper told reporters gathered outside the city zoo in the Chinese port of Dandong, "because it seemed to offer the best of both worlds. Dandong Zoo is very well stocked with animals, and a lot of Chinese people like to go hunting as a recreational activity. So why not let them come to the zoo, hire a rifle, and shoot the animals?"

The keeper was speaking after outraged animal lovers had organised a boycott of the zoo, and forced him to suspend his controversial shoot-to-kill policy. "It wasn't as if we let people shoot any animal they wanted to. Obviously, they couldn't shoot the rare breeds, just a few of the unprotected species, or some old or ill animals. They went into a special shooting area to do it, and we made sure that children couldn't see the animals being shot, although it's true that they could hear what was going on. At first, the system worked fine. The huntsmen were happy with their kill, and we got a good supply of fresh meat, and extra income from the rifle hire. But then the protests started, and now all that's had to stop.

"The trouble is that most visitors don't understand what really goes on in a zoo. Many of the animals are carnivores, and need fresh meat every day, and many of them, like the snakes and owls, will only eat living creatures. Surely being shot can't be any worse than being eaten alive? But the people who come here for a visit think that a zoo is just like a Walt Disney cartoon. Well, it's not. I'm telling you, it's a jungle in there." *(Liaoshen Evening News, 12/6/03. Spotter: Jon Dye)*

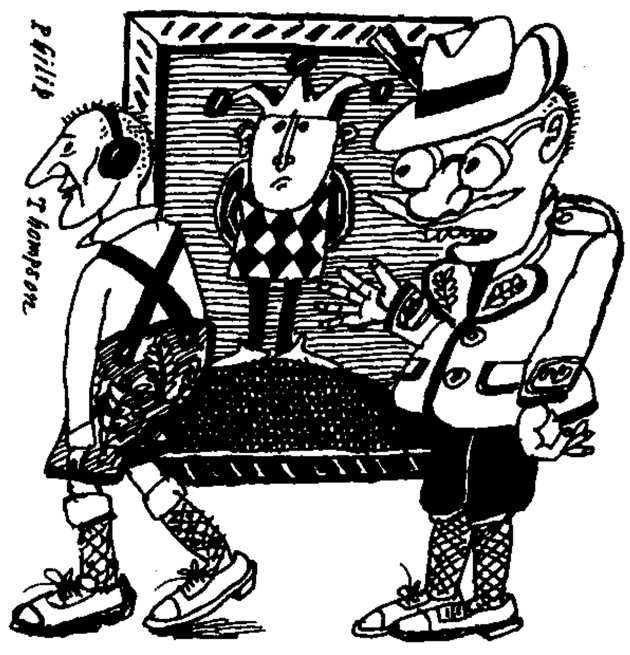
—o—

"Editor; I have a nephew and niece who we are sending to school, at the Pho School adjacent to Wat Pho temple on the Naklua Road. The problem is that during school hours, Wat Pho conducts cremations, and the smoke, plus the stench, wafts over to the school, and is making the students sick enough to retch and vomit. How can we expect our young children to believe warnings about the health risks of smoking cigarettes, when they are forced to inhale the fumes of burning bodies day after day? Isn't there a law that specifically instructs all crematoriums to install scrubbers or devices to eliminate this stench that emanates from these tall smokestacks during a cremation? Mr Mayor, please check this out, as the health of living students should predominate over the disposal of dead bodies. Yours, Hang Pho Chai." (Pattaya Mail, 10/6/03. Spotter: Sean Cassidy)

—o—

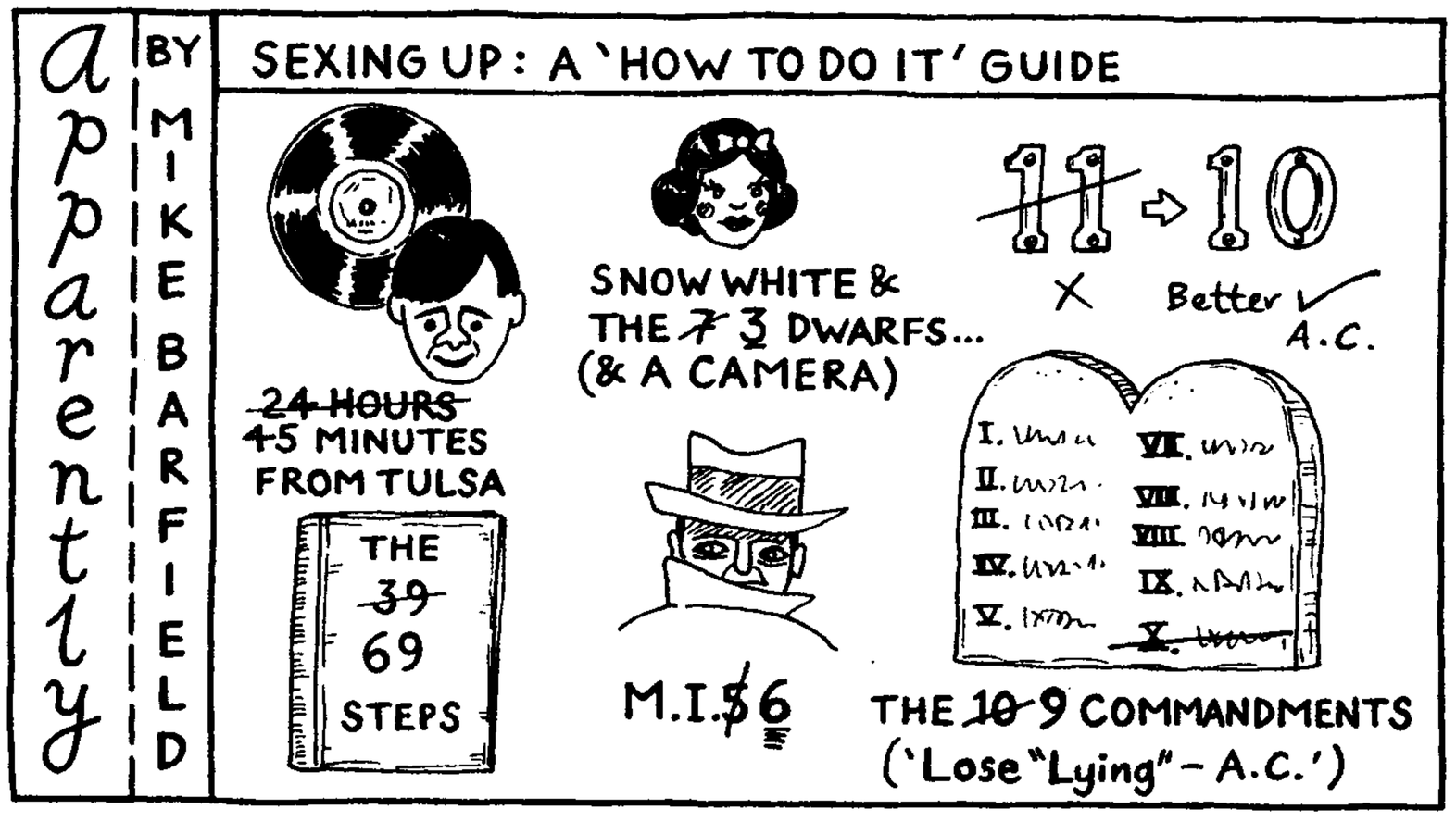
"As a teenager, all I was interested in was art," Rainer Herpel told reporters at his family home in the German town of Bad Ems, "but my father was always against it. No matter what I said, he refused to do anything but criticise, and even banned me from attending art school. One day in 1974, there came a point when I had nothing more to say, so I simply went to my room and stopped speaking altogether."

Earlier, Herpel's mother had explained the background to her son's twenty-nine-year silence, which ended a few months ago. "Rainer has always been a stubborn lad, and when my husband mocked his pictures and banned him from art school, he locked himself in his room and stopped talking. For twenty-nine years, he never said a word. He ate only hamburgers, alone in his room, and never had any visitors. He just painted pictures, all of them named after



Beatles lyrics, like The Fool on the Hill and You Won't See Me. On the few occasions that he did go out, he always left the house with ear protectors on, to block out all sound. But then, last year, my husband died, and Rainer immediately began speaking again after all those years, just as though nothing had happened. As I say, he's always been a stubborn lad."

Later, Rainer added that "the public response has been remarkable. People used to walk around with angry faces when they saw me, but now that I'm talking again, they're really happy." *(Sydney Morning Herald, 9/6/03. Spotter: Charles Stokes)*



BLAIR DEFENDS WAR ON BBC

by Our Defence Staff W.M. Deedes

THE PRIME Minister last night furiously defended his decision to launch an all-out attack on the BBC. He produced a special dossier compiled by top level intelligence officers (*Alastair Campbell*) which gives intricate details of the threat posed to Great Britain by the evil regime of Greg Dyke.

Aerial photographs show that the BBC has newsrooms all over the country which can launch devastating bulletins aimed at the Prime Minister "within 45 minutes".

Weapons of mass communication

The Prime Minister said, "Future generations will not forgive us if we do not seize this opportunity to destroy the BBC for good."

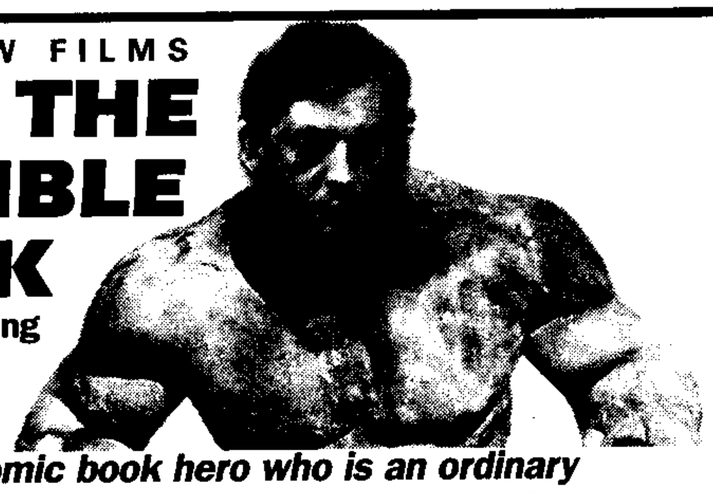
Greg "Saddam" Dyke is 58.

NEW FILMS

THE INCREDIBLE SULK

starring

Gordon Brown



★ ***HE'S BACK! The comic book hero who is an ordinary chancellor until he doesn't become prime minister. Then he goes green with envy and goes into a terrific sulk!***

Now showing at the following Gnomeons ● *MANDELSON COMMON* ● *KAUFMAN END* ● *HATTERSLEY NORTH* ● *EDWARD HEATH*

Wimbledon THE BIG MATCH

Dyke v. Blair (TV Centre Court)

IS DUNCAN SMITH STILL ALIVE?

Mystery Broadcast Could Be Tory Leader

by Our Political Staff Sadman Insane

EXPERTS WERE last night analysing a tape broadcast by Radio Neasden FM which purported to be the voice of Iain Duncan Smith.

Said one, "This has all the hallmarks of the Tory leader. The coughs are rhythmic and punctuated by long silences. It could very well be him."

However, other commentators believe that Duncan Smith could not have survived the recent onslaught.

"It could be anyone," said one expert. "There are many Duncan Smith lookalikes trying to confuse the public and this sounds to me like the work of former Guardian columnist and Karl Marx biographer Francis Duncan Wheen."

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94 A Service for the Standing Down of an Appointee Gay Bishop

President (The Archbishop of Canterbury, for it is he): Brothers and Brothers we are gathered together here today in a spirit of great sadness to lament the standing down of our brother _____ and his live-in celibate partner _____ who has, let's face it, also been sharing the terrible traumas of the past few weeks.

(The congregation shall all make the "Sign of Disapproval". They may tut or shake their heads or make some such gesture indicating sympathy with the non-appointee.)

President: Who giveth away his job?

Non-Appointee: I do.

President: Do you promise to go quietly and not to give interviews to the media?

Non-Appointee: I so promise.

President: I now declare you Non-Bishop of Reading.

(The evangelical members of the congregation may now hug each in exultation.)

Evangelicals: Hallelujah!

CONFESSION

President: We shall now confess our faults before God, particularly the Bishop of Oxford whose stupid idea this whole thing was in the first place.

Bishop of Oxford: Good morning, Brian. Good morning, Sarah. You know, in a very real sense it wasn't my fault at all. It was the Archbishop of Canterbury's and I think we should all think about that as we move towards a more inclusive and gay-friendly Church of England.

READING

(There follows a reading by the Reverend Gay Friendly First Woman Bishop of Nova Scotia, taken from the Epistle to the Guardian.)

Reader: At the beginning of the twenty-first century it is frankly appalling that the Church should continue to discriminate against homosexuals. Didn't Our Lord himself never marry and consort with sailors around the Sea of Gallilee?

THE INTERRUPTION

(Here members of the African Churches may voice their disapproval.)

Bishop O'Nanugu of Rumbabwe: I am not sittin' here listenin' to dis filth about sodomy and de liftin' of cassocks, but on de other hand, I give thanks to de Lord dat de Bishop of Reading is cast down into de fiery furnace wid all de other dirty buggers... Amen.

THE OFFERTORY

The Hymn *The Gay Thou Gavest Lord Has Ended* shall be sung whilst the offertory plate is passed around. The Evangelicals will keep their hands in their pockets, leaving the collection very small indeed.

THE DISMISSAL

President: You're fired. Get out.

Non-Appointee: *(Sob)*

All: This is a sad day for all of us *(or they may say "This is a glad day for all of us").*

RECESSIONAL HYMN

It's Raining Men by The Weather Girls.

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

The Editor Alastair Campbell writes:

I'm sorry, but I have had to hold over the Vicar's promised thoughts on "the meaning of truth" because there are more important matters which need to be dealt with this week, which is why I have just burst into his study and clicked 'delete' on his computer.

Sorry, Tony, but when my f****** integrity is being attacked by ignorant people all round the parish, then those people have to realise how serious this is.

I have been accused of deliberately falsifying a number of important parish documents.

What could be a more serious f****** allegation to make against someone occupying a very senior position of trust in the running of this parish, okay?

People say that, as editor of this newsletter, I should stay in the background. Bollocks is what I say to that!

What am I expected to do when these creepy little bastards are given airtime to make these ridiculous charges against me which are totally without foundation, and which they have not got a single shred of evidence to substantiate whatsoever?

What am I supposed to do? Just sit back and take it on the chin and turn the other cheek, as the Vicar would no doubt tell you, in his smug, holier-than-thou way?

Don't get me wrong. I've got a lot of respect for the Vicar. But let's face it, he doesn't frankly know his arse from his elbow. Streetwise, he's a f****** no-no.

And if it wasn't for me telling him what to say and what to do every minute of the day and night, our Tony, bless him, would still be some dim little curate in a one-horse parish out in the sticks, drinking tea with old ladies.

I've had to put up with an awful lot recently, I don't mind saying, what with the Vicar's wife going bananas with that new-age loony she's let herself be taken in by.

I've told Tony again and again, they're a pair of f****** fruitcakes, her and her mother, and it's not doing the parish any good having the Vicar's wife wandering round with someone who looks as if she had escaped from a refugee camp in the 60s.

As I told the Vicar a hundred times – "get rid", and as I said to Cherie herself – "get a life". But it's like talking to the walking dead, those two!

If the Vicar is so interested in truth, then perhaps he'd better cop some of this. Without me, that boy is nothing.

All those people round the parish who've been predicting that I was going to quit seem to have forgotten one rather important little fact. If I was to go, then the whole St Albion's show goes down the swanee.

And I'm not f****** joking!

So I have to stay, don't I? I'm not going to

do a Milburn and walk out on the Vicar in his hour of need. Not yet anyway.

If things are looking bad for the Vicar – which, frankly, they are – then he's only brought it on himself, along with his wife and her nutcase friend.

And another thing. Why does he keep ringing up that sad old queen who used to be churchwarden to ask his advice? I mean, you'd have to be blind like Mr Blunkett not to see that he's trouble on legs!

So, that's it! Unless I get a full apology in writing from everyone in the parish, delivered to my office by nine o'clock tomorrow morning, there will be hell to pay for all concerned.

I hope I have made my message abundantly f****** clear!

Signed:

A. Campbell
(Editor-in-Chief)

A Short July 4th Message From The Reverend Dubya Bush of the Church of the Latter Day Morbombs

My friends in Englandland and your good pastor Tony Henman! Greetings and warnings! The struggle against the Great Satan is not over! He has now appeared in a new guise – not this time in a beret and a moustache but in a big beard and a funny hat. And this incarnation of the evil one dwelleth in the land of Iranland!

I call upon you brothers and sisters to stand shoulder to shoulder with me as we go into the next crusade against Irania in order to rid the world of peace for ever. Sister Condoleeza and Brother Rumsfeld join me in wishing you a Happy Judgement Day!

Yours, Rev. Dubya

P.S. If you know the whereabouts of Mr Satan there's a $50 million reward to you. Go Gettim!! *D.B*

Women's Groups

Mrs Hodge, who has just been appointed as the parish creche facilitator, gave a most interesting talk on "How to meet the needs of children in the 21st Century".

After the talk, there were a number of questions concerning Mrs Hodge's past record in allowing paedophiles to supervise toddlers' groups in her former parish. Mrs Hodge defended herself in a very impressive fashion, pointing out that she had learned a lot from her experience of paedophiles and, as a result, she was sure that such a thing would never happen again.

Sadly, this was not enough to satisfy some of the ladies, and Mrs Wadley in particular strained the patience of the audience by claiming that she had proof of Mrs Hodge organising a "cover up". At this, the chair, Mrs Jowell, reminded everyone that Mrs Hodge was admirably qualified for her new post as a very old friend of the Vicar.

Mrs Jowell also asked everyone to contribute more to the parish lottery, as all the money raised would now be going to very good causes, such as new disabled toilet facilities for asylum seekers. Mrs Amos served some special delicacies from her native Africa made from 'mealie beans', which we all found very interesting! The leftovers were much appreciated by the Boy Scouts on Tuesday night!

Our next talk will be from Mrs Hewitt on "The dangers of early retirement".

Ali Campbell's Smile-Awhile

Joke of the week sent in by Mrs Fiona Millar

Vicar: My wife is going to the West Indies for her holiday.

Parishioner: Jamaica?

Vicar: No. It's a freebie and I'm going as well.

If you have an amusing joke about the vicar please send it to Mr Campbell and you can win a £5 Sainsbury's voucher.

AN APOLOGY FROM THE VICAR

The Vicar very much regrets that he was unable to attend the recent meeting at which parishioners voted by an overwhelming majority in favour of bringing back capital punishment for anyone caught hunting with dogs. The Vicar is well aware that many members of the congregation hold strong views on this issue, but he considers that it is not his job to give a moral lead.

BABY TO GIVE BIRTH TO OWN MOTHER

by Our Medical Staff **M. Brio**

IN AN astonishing breakthrough for medical science, researchers at the Bram Stoker Institute for Human Development in New Zombie, California have developed a new technique whereby the frozen eggs of aborted foetuses can be implanted into the transplanted womb of a same-sex partner and fertilised by the frozen sperm of a dead gay bishop, thus producing an embryo which can then be genetically modified to become a large tomato.

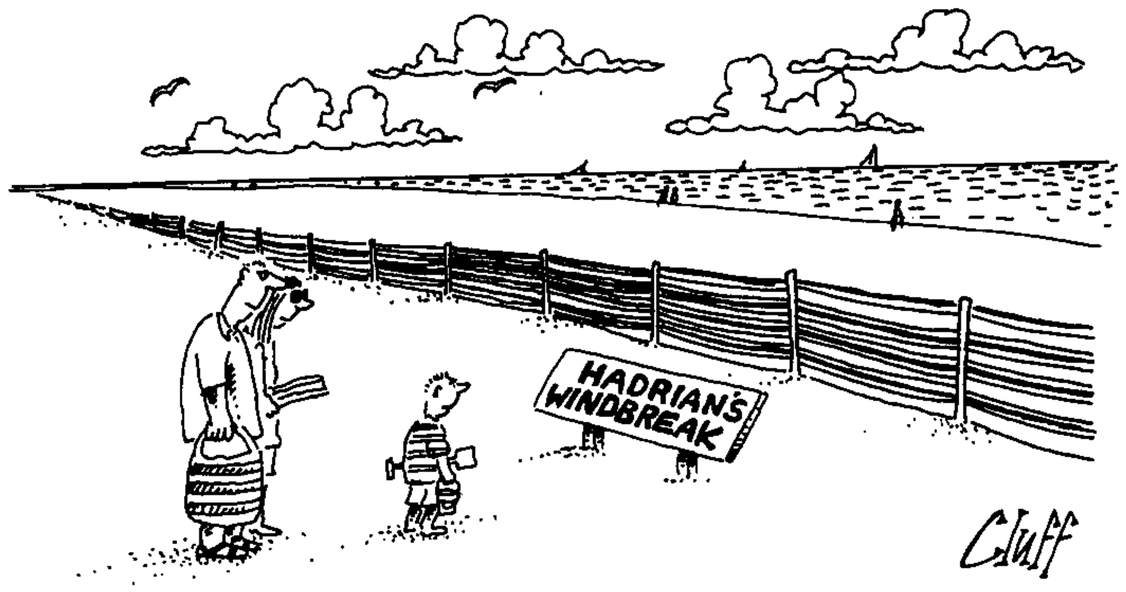
Dr Frank N. Stein

Which Came First, The Money Or The Egg?

Said the head of the clinic, Dr Frank N. Stein, "We are very excited by this development, which will allow a lot of childless couples to enjoy the richly fulfilling experience of becoming their own salad". *(Surely "mothers"?)*

His partner Dr Acula added, "We are now like proud parents, looking forward to the safe delivery of a large and healthy cheque."

Last night a spokesman for The Human Embryological Ethics And In Vitro Fertilisation Authority said that there was no evidence that eating eggs could cause BSE but "under the precautionary principle we recommend that all fish should be destroyed six weeks before birth".



GOVERNMENT TO OUTLAW HUNTING

by Our Political Staff **Robert Fox**

THE Prime Minister has today announced a new bill to ban the traditional English pursuit of 'hunting for facts'.

He told reporters, "Fact hunting is nothing more than an opportunity for a tiny minority of privileged people to go around the country looking for blood."

Foxed Up

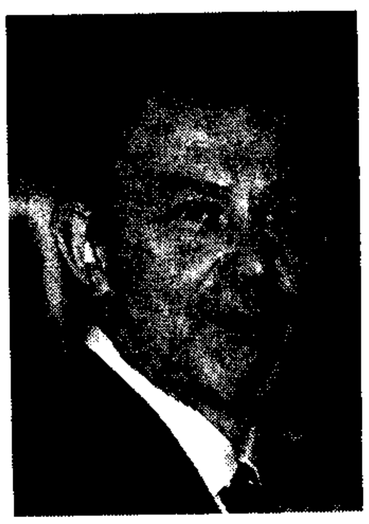
He continued, "They are not really interested in facts, all they want to do is to hound innocent creatures like myself to death."

Fact hunters meanwhile were quick to defend their centuries' old way of life. Said one, "We provide an essential service. If we didn't pursue facts then we would have vermin running the country." He continued, "It is a basic freedom in a democratic country to unleash the dogs and try and unearth the facts."

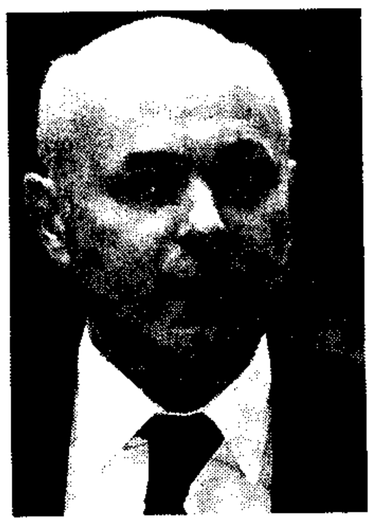
Bully Ho!

However, a leading anti-hunt campaigner, Mr Alastair Campbell, said "They just do it for fun. It's sick, it's cruel and it is very painful. These people have got to be stopped. I think we should hunt them down and kill them."

BBC bias row latest



The BBC is biased against us



The BBC is biased against us

We demand equal bias against us

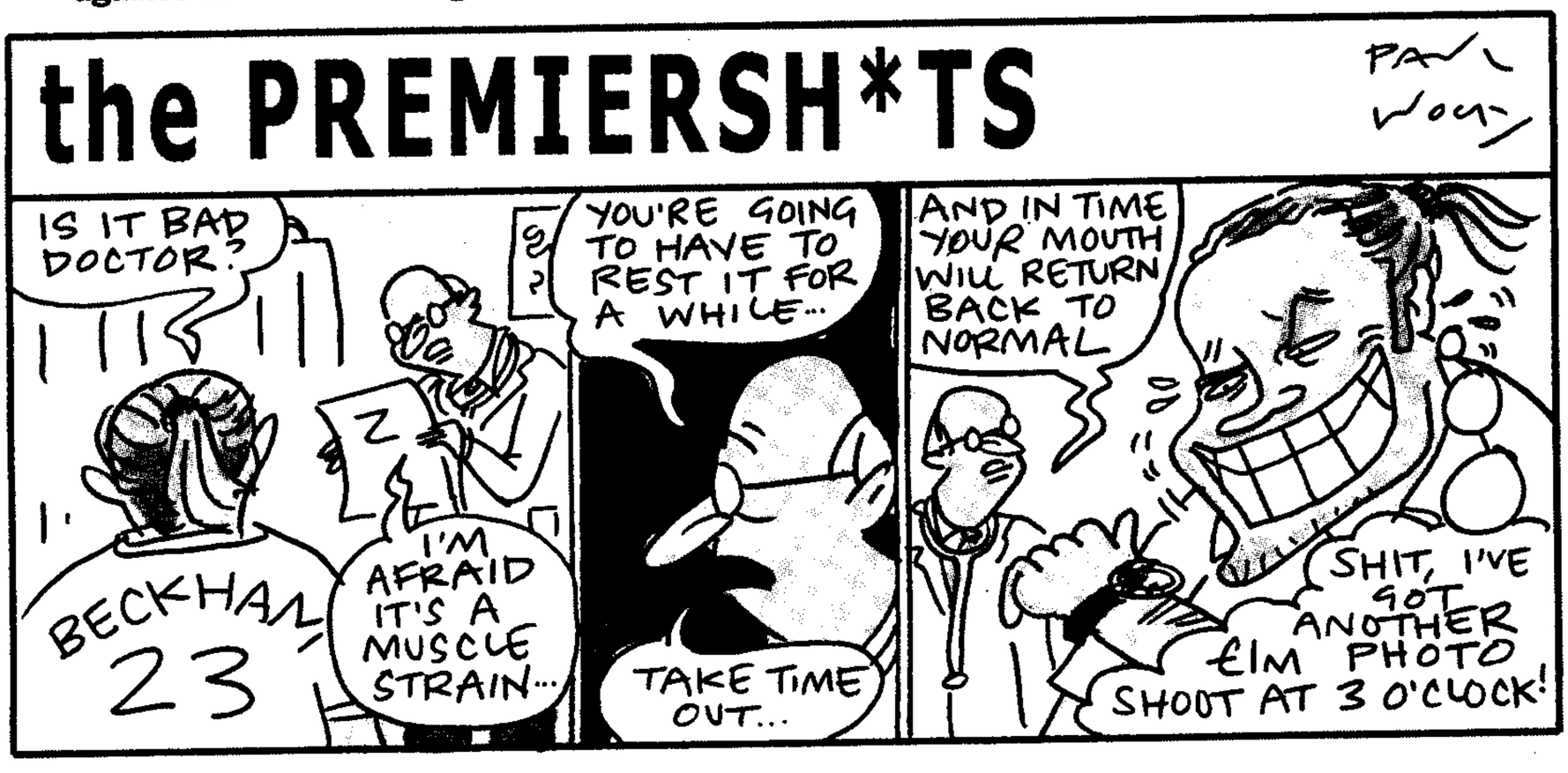
TOP 10 BESTSELLERS

(As supplied by Tesco, Britain's leading bookseller)

1. Harry Potter And The Weapons Of Mass Destruction
2. Harry Potter And The Dodgy Dossier
3. Harry Potter And The 23 Shirt
4. Harry Potter And The Gay Bishop
5. Harry Potter And The Bridget Riley Exhibition
6. Harry Potter And The Reform Of The Common Agricultural Policy
7. Harry Potter And The Bin Laden Lookalike

(That's enough Harry Potter books. Ed.)

the PREMIERSH*TS

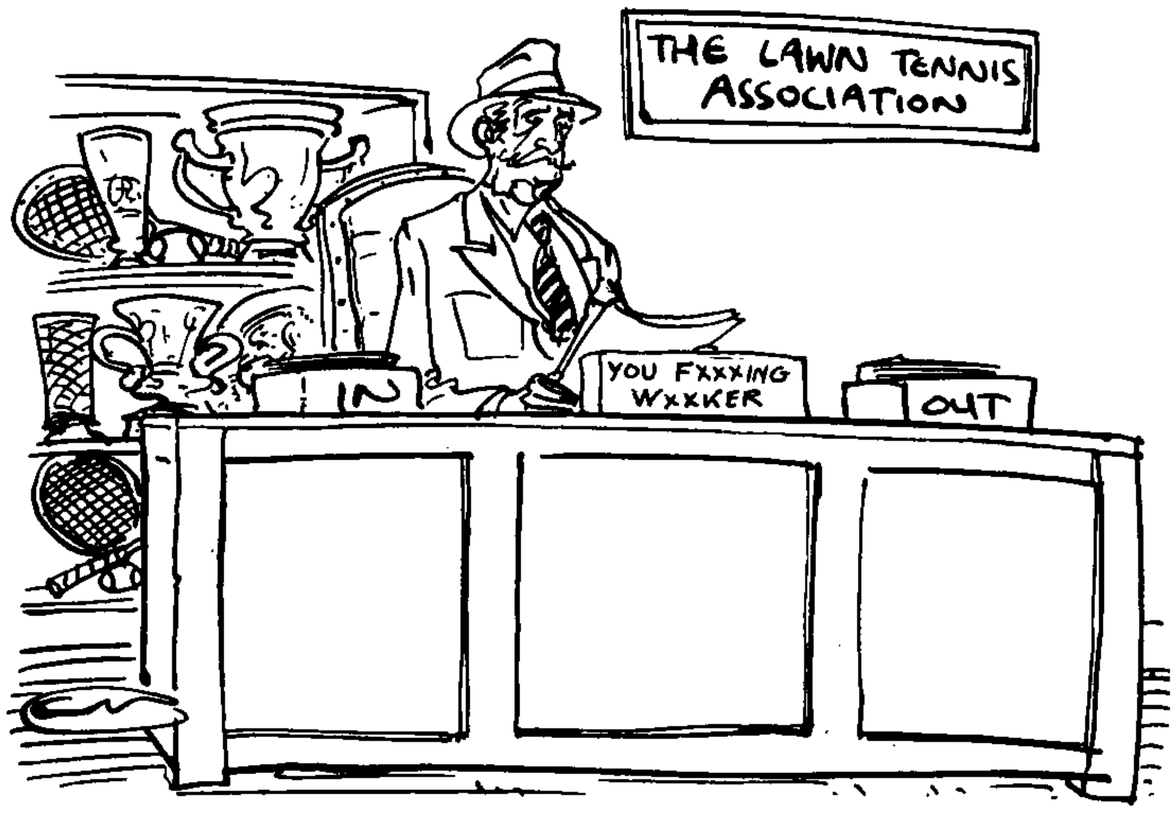

IS IT BAD DOCTOR?
BECKHAM 23
I'M AFRAID IT'S A MUSCLE STRAIN...
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO REST IT FOR A WHILE...
TAKE TIME OUT...
AND IN TIME YOUR MOUTH WILL RETURN BACK TO NORMAL
SHIT, I'VE GOT ANOTHER £1M PHOTO SHOOT AT 3 O'CLOCK!
PAUL WOOLEY

TV Highlights

Fawlty Towers "The Germans", BBC2
Wednesday 9.00pm

A CLASSIC episode where, after a series of hilarious misunderstandings, resulting in him being appointed President of the E.U., Basilconi insults a group of German MEPs by continually mentioning the war.

★ ***Eye rating – a memorable farce***



AN APOLOGY FROM MRS HEWITT

Secretary of State for Trade and Industry

IN RECENT years, we as a government may have given the impression that the most important quality of a successful country was youthfulness. When the prime minister told the Labour Party Conference in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 that he was proud to be the "young leader of a young country with young ideas and young energy taking Britain into a young future," the audience may have interpreted this as suggesting that Mr Blair believed youth was in some way a good thing.

We now realise, after looking at the shortfall in pension provision, that nothing is more important to the future of Britain than that old people should carry on making their immensely valuable contribution to society until they drop dead. Otherwise, without the inestimable benefits which flow from decades of experience and wisdom, the country is going to be completely bankrupt by 2015. On these grounds, the prime minister's theme at this year's party conference will be how proud he is to be an "old leader of an ancient country with its well-tried ideas and senile energy taking Britain into a historic future". We apologise for any confusion that may have been caused by these two apparently contradictory viewpoints.

COUGH SPLUTTERS AT POLL SHOCK

by Our Political Staff **Benny Lyn**

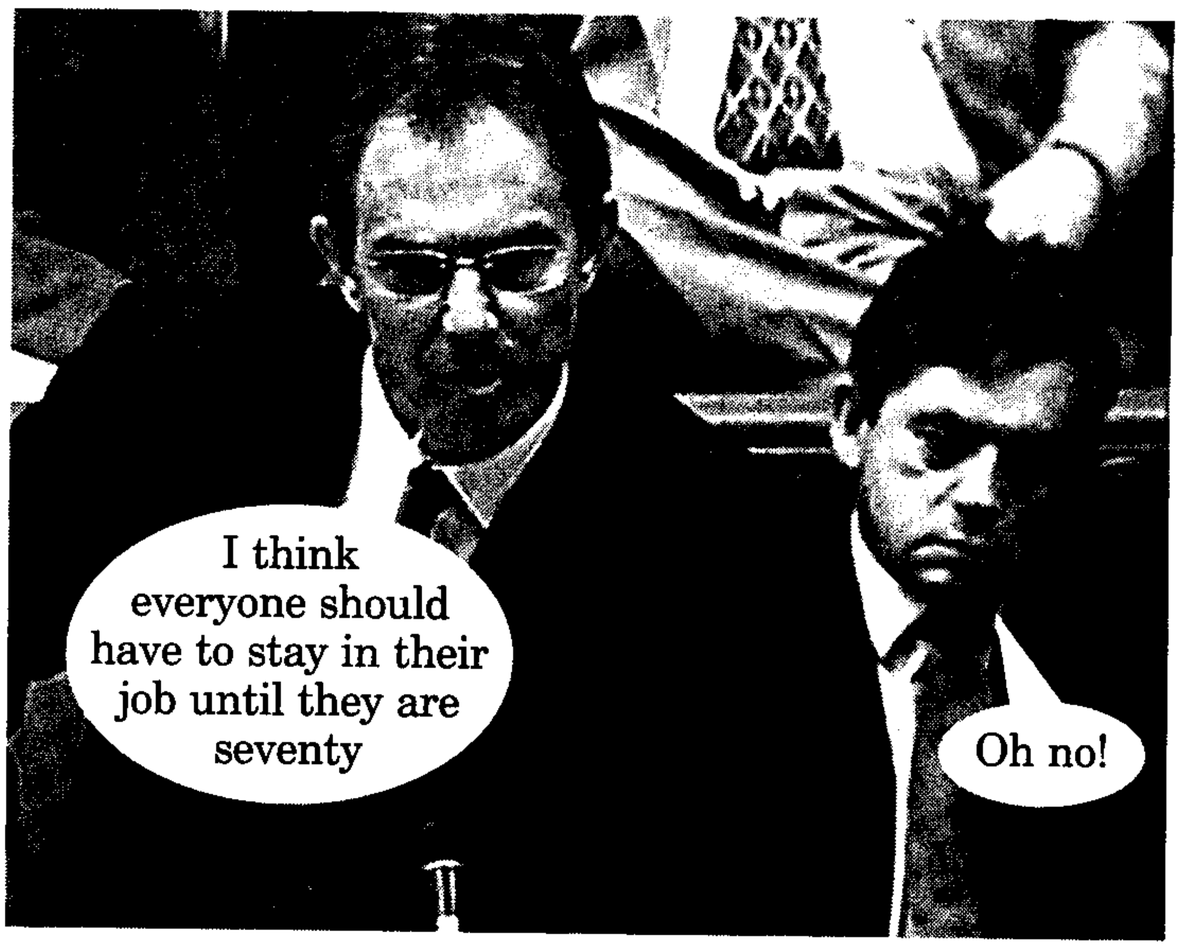
THE world of politics was rocked to its foundations last night by a new poll showing that the Conservative Party had recorded a 2-point lead over Labour for the first time in a decade.

All over Westminster MPs were fainting in disbelief at the news, none more so than Mr Duncan Cough, the Tory leader, who was said by aides to be "speechless".

"This was not at all what we were expecting," said one of Cough's closest allies. "All our own surveys have shown that 95 percent of the electorate believe the Tory party is totally useless, and that Iain is the worst party leader in the history of the world.

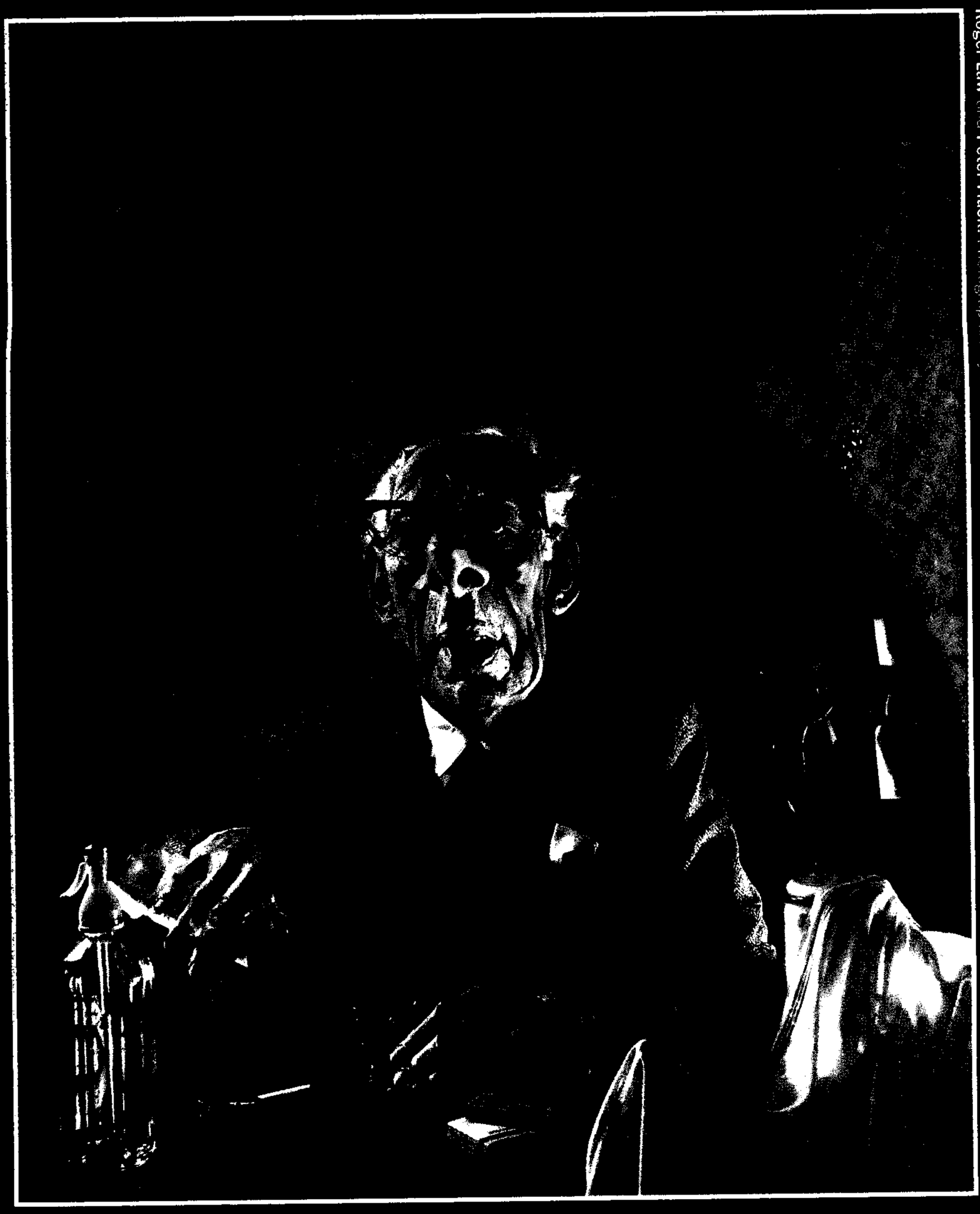
"We therefore discount this rogue poll as merely a mid-term blip and we are confident that the overall trend will soon continue its downward course."

NEW AGEISM BAN



MARRIAGE A La mode
CAME THE DAWN
PINK PAPER
UNMARRIED HETEROSEXUAL COUPLE ARRESTED FOR LIVING TOGETHER
YAWN!
I'VE NOTICED YOU'RE ALWAYS LAUGHING FIT TO BUST DOWN AT THE CLUB, WITH YOUR SO-CALLED FRIENDS! REAL LIFE AN' SOUL OF THE PARTY! BUT WHAT DO I GET WHEN YOU DRAG YOUR SELF HOME? MOAN, MOAN, BLOODY MOAN!.....
IT'S JUST THAT WE SEEM TO BE IN SUCH A RUT, WHERE'S THE MAGIC GONE?
WHAT TIME DO YOU CALL THIS?!
RIGHTS OF AGREEMENT
DOESN'T THIS SLIP OF PAPER MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU! OBVIOUSLY NOT! ALL YOU DO IS SIT AROUND THE FLAT ALL DAY WATCHING OLD MOVIES! WHO GOES TO THE SUPERMARKET? WHO WALKS THE DOG! DOES THE HOUSE-WORK? TAKES THE CAR TO THE GARAGE.....
DADDIES, I THINK I'M STRAIGHT!
HEATH

DEAR BILL



Roger Law and Peter Fluck. Photographed by John Lawrence Jones 1982

A selection of the letters written by Richard Ingrams and John Wells

FROM DENIS AND MARGARET THATCHER

10 Downing Street
S.W.1.

94 FLOOD STREET
LONDON SW3

18 MAY 1979

Dear Bill,

So sorry I couldn't make it on Tuesday. The Major rang me last night to report, and obviously I missed a jolly good day. I haven't played down at Sandwich since '68, when poor old Archie Bracketts dropped down dead at the fourteenth. I remember we drove over to the Dolphin afterwards and had a slap-up meal, which I am sure is what Archie would have wanted had he been alive.

Anyway, as you may have seen in the *Telegraph*, all hell has broken loose around here since we were last able to have a chat over lunch that day at the Army & Navy. M. has become Prime Minister, and it's caused no end of a flap. Telephone never stops ringing. All my daffs got trampled by a lot of bloody pressmen on election day. I actually spotted some photographer johnny from the *Sun* nipping up the fire-escape trying to catch Carol starkers in the bath, dirty bugger.

To cap it all, we've now had to ship the whole shooting match over to Number Ten, and

(continued over)

I don't know yet whether I'm coming or going. The bloody fools from Pickfords seem to have lost that set of Ping Irons Burmah gave me when I handed in my cards. What with decorators, policemen and politicos running about all over the place, Number Ten is the worst shambles I've seen since the Dieppe show in '42. What's more, there doesn't seem to be a decent local, and they've even got some Ministry of Works chappie called Boris to take care of the garden, so any hope I had of taking off a peaceful hour or two in the greenhouse is out of the window.

Anyway, back to Tuesday. Why I couldn't make it was that M. insisted I turn up for some kind of State Opening of Parliament or other. I had assumed now the election was over I would be excused this kind of thing, but oh no. I had just carried my spare clubs out to the jalopy when heigh ho! - up goes a window and M. is giving me my marching orders. It's off to Moss Bros. for the full kit, and at that moment, I don't mind telling you, I couldn't help thinking pretty enviously of you, Monty and the Major enjoying a few pre-match snifters at the 19th without a care in the world.

It took ages to get kitted out. The staff at Moss Bros. all seem to be gyppos these days, and there was a bit of a communications problem. But eventually I managed to get a cab back to the House of Commons, only to find that I'd left my Invite at Downing Street. I told the chap on the door that I was Mr Thatcher, and he said, 'That's what they all say'. After about 20 minutes they agreed to go and get M. out to vouch for my *bona fides* and, as you can imagine, I wasn't top of the popularity stakes at that particular juncture!

M. then had to go off to do her stuff, so I just mooched around for a while, looking for a watering-hole. What a place, Bill! If you ask me, it's just an antiquated rabbit warren - miles and miles of corridors, with chaps in evening dress wandering about like a lot of super-annuated penguins. Luckily I eventually bumped into a familiar face in the shape of George Brown. He seemed to know his way around, and we ended up in a nice little bar overlooking the river, with an awfully jolly crowd of chaps who were watching the show on the TV.

It all seemed to go quite smoothly, but I was a bit miffed to see M. fussing over that fellow Stevas, and taking the fluff off his collar. To tell you the truth, I don't like the cut of that chap's jib. If you ask me, he's not absolutely 100%, and when I said as much a lot of the fellows at the bar agreed.

On a more serious note, do tell Monty and the Major that I am definitely on for the 24th. I've checked with M's secretary, and there's absolutely nothing in the book. So I'll get the usual 11.08 from Charing Cross, and if Monty could pick me up at Tonbridge, we'll meet you in Ye Olde Shippe in Ye Bottle at 12.00 sharp. (I wonder if they've still got any of that Glen Keswick we had the night poor old Tuppy bought it?) Must close, as M. has got some Hun coming to dinner and I've got to do my stuff again. I sometimes wonder who won the bloody war!

Yours aye!

Denis

"I must say, my heart goes out to poor old Foot. He must be beginning to regret ever embarking on such a wretched old age. As I may have said before, I think it was his wife who put him up to it. There he could have been still, wandering about on Hampstead Heath, taking the dog for a walk, browsing through his second-hand bookshops, not a care in the world: instead he must be up at the crack of dawn, hardly time for a shit and a shave, and straight into battle with Benn or the Boss. What a life!"

10 April 1981

10 Downing Street
Whitehall

29 January 1982

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your condolences on the safe return of the son and h from his Sahara car rally. Honestly, what a prize twerp! I washed my hands of the little blighter years ago, and when the Boss told me he was intending to drive across the desert with some fancy French bint he'd picked up in the pits, my response was that he could go to hell in a handcart for all I cared... Next thing I know, M. is hammering on my door at some unearthly hour to say she has just heard on the Jimmy Young Show that the little bugger has been missing for four days and what was I going to do about it? Answer, turn over and go back to sleep. Cue for maternal hysteria, call myself a man, etc, why yours is truly always so pathetic in a crisis? Eventually I found my glasses and endeavoured to pour a bit of oil on the troubled H_20, arguing that a) a bad penny usually turns up in the end and b) that being inexperienced in these matters he had probably driven off on one of the B-roads in search of a quiet layby to try a bit of hanky-panky with la belle froggette. Need I tell you that this last analysis went down like a cup of cold sick, waterworks turned on, hanky out, male sex maligned, wailing and gnashing of teeth, all culminating in yours truly agreeing to jump on the first Laker standby to Timbuktu in search of Prodigal Son.

Later: Proprietor now back on course, heading for showdown with the CBI, DT hurtles down to Gatwick, soon steadying the nerves with a largish brownie at thirty thousand feet, rudely jostled by reptiles, all treating the whole thing like a day trip to Boulogne, air blue with smutty anecdotes.

Touch down desert airstrip, local time 11.30pm, a real dump if ever I saw one called Tamanrasset. (I had a dim memory that poor old Podmore bought it somewhere near there while serving with the Rats, but no matter.) Usual wog nonsense about no snorts, some smarmy little FO cove whispering out of the corner of his mouth about special arrangements at the Tam Hilton, and off we drive. Reptiles have beat us to it, and are soon drinking the place dry. Would you believe it, ten quid for a single? Obviously mine Host, Ali Baba, had seen them cõming, and was asking a hundred quid a go for his Telex. It turned out that no one had the faintest clue the so-called race was even on. It had all been organised, if that is the word, out of a little office in Paris by a bunch of cowboys as a publicity stunt. In these times of high unemployment however an army of motorcycles, delivery vans, articulated trucks and every conceivable type of wheeled vehicle had set off from Marseilles to pit their wits against the hostile environment while the vultures circled overhead, scenting a bit of free grub.

Given such a bunch of hopeless layabouts at the wheel Mark was not the only one to have come to grief along the way, and in the meantime, thanks to the Boss hoisting storm cones, the entire Algerian airforce in the shape of three helicopters and an old Hercules was grinding through the sky overhead, in constant danger of collision with the squadron of French Mirages put up by Mitterand who seems to have taken a strange shine to the Boss. (Very decent of him, en passant, considering the man's a raving Red who has, you may remember, several times tried to arrest the NatWest's representative in Paris for issuing private cheque-books.)

I was sitting comfortably enough ensconced in the Lounge enjoying the patronage of the *Daily Telegraph* Motoring Correspondent when one of these pilot johnnies breezed in for a quick one and said would I like to go aloft in his kite for a shuftie at the terrain? Moments later we were bucketing about in the inky blackness, friend wog shouting back incomprehensible references to flickering lights beneath, and it crossed my mind that given a fair wind the Boss might soon have to send out another search party to bring in yours truly.

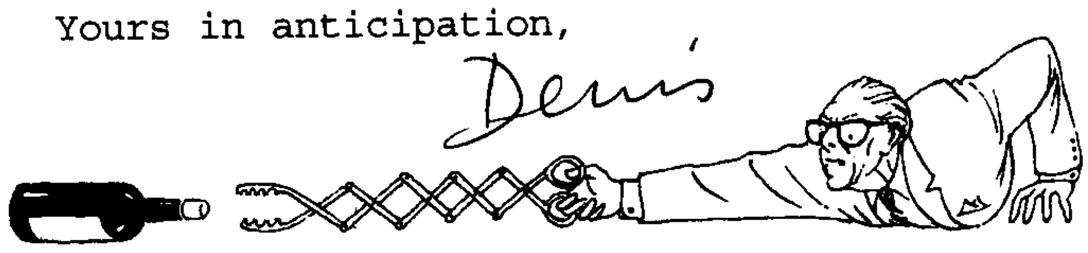
When we eventually returned, empty-handed, to the Bar, bugger me if young Mark isn't sitting there with a carefully nurtured growth of beard, drawling away to the reptiles, affecting great unconcern about the whole episode, and clearly seeing himself as the hero of the hour. At the first possible juncture I took the blighter to one side and gave him a pretty largish piece of my mind. Did he realise that the air forces of the entire Free World had been out trying to find him and his bit of French fluff for the last seventy-two hours? That his mother was on the very brink of a breakdown? That I myself had had to come out to this Godforsaken oasis and would no doubt shortly be expected to partake of sheepseyes with the wog powers that be, and all because he refused to take a job like any other young man of his wealth and background? Absolutely no response. Sulky look, not his fault if parental brigade overreacts, he and Mamselle Fifi perfectly happy sitting in the desert waiting for the local A.A. man to turn up.

The rest, I imagine, is history. Flash-bulbs popping all the way back to Chequers. Unquestionably the worst moment of the whole episode, when Saatchis had invited every reptile in the business down for a photo call on the lawn, and it was suggested I should put my arm round the little sniveller as a sign of delirious happiness at the reunion. I drew the line at this despite a withering look from M., and broke away at the earliest moment to recover my equilibrium in the Waggonload of Monkeys.

How would you feel about two days in the Seychelles at the beginning of February? I met a little man in the Club the other day called Davis who said he could fix it up.

Yours in anticipation,

Denis



GOVERNMENT HOUSE
PORT STANLEY

14 JANUARY 1983

Dear Bill,

First things first. I wouldn't bother if I were you to go up to town for the Lillywhites sale. I had a quick whizz round en route for the Ritz Bar, and quite frankly, apart from the evil-smelling horde of Arabs hurling athletic supports from hand to hand in the jogging department there didn't seem much of interest to you. I made do with a set of thermal Japanese golf hats in pastel shades, knocked down to practically nothing. Maurice's friend with the funny leg swears by them, and I thought they might enliven the scene at Worplesdon.

You'll forgive me for not giving you prior notice of this present little excursion, but we were all sworn to keep absolutely mum, lest the Argies bomb the airstrip prior to our arrival.

When it was first mooted, in company with assorted brasshats and other Whitehall buffers all drawing her attention to the various hazards attached, I wrung my hands imploring M. to think again. Pym however seemed singularly sanguine, urging her to press on and fulfil her destiny. (I wonder why?)

Needless to say, the Boss had her way, but agreed to throw sand in the eyes of the reptiles with talk of a cancellation, and limit the operation to an Ulster-style 'inner and outer'. I thought it only right and proper to motor the old girl out to Brize Norton and flutter my hanky from the waving base, telling her as she studied her red boxes in the passenger seat of my deep regrets that I couldn't come along and enjoy all the fun. After she said 'But you *are* coming, Denis' for the third time the penny finally dropped and I began to feel very queasy indeed. Not only was I unsuitably

accoutred for the Antarctic, but I had several dates lined up on the old While The Cat's Away The Mice Will Play syndrome, and therefore had to ring around from the only available telephone in the Nissen Hut at the drome. All slightly embarrassing.

Next thing I know it's up a little ladder into the boneshaker, chocks away, and eyes down for seven hours hardarse non-stop to Ascension. The worst thing about it, Bill, was that not being forewarned I was deprived even of the solace of my little flask which I always pack for these occasions. I tried to light a gasper, but it was immediately knocked out of my hand by some Air Commodore, roaring above the din of the engines that I must be mad, didn't I realise I was sitting on forty thousand gallons of high octane fuel? You can imagine my mental state when we tottered out at Ascension, a godforsaken spot if ever I saw one (or so I thought until we reached the Falklands). My hopes of a quick dash to the Duty Free were immediately put paid to as we were frog-marched up another ladder into an even older biplane, and off for another thirteen hours of unmitigated hell, teeth chattering with the vibration, as we nose-dived towards the sea to take on fuel from a stalling nuclear bomber, Margaret unruffled by it all, still deep in her boxes and writing her Christmas thank-you letters.

Finally I was awakened from a nightmarish doze and hustled out into the blizzard to be met by that awful little slug Hunt, who used to be the Governor, and a small crowd of blue-nosed Sheepshaggers, the surrounding view bringing back unhappy memories of our grisly holidays with Lord Pucefeatures on the Isle of Muck. M. strides in, a dreadful gleam in her eye, and begins to press the flesh, a half-witted photographer from the local roneoed news-sheet The Shaggers' Weekly

> "The Boss's other bright-eyed boy, called Brittan, is a smarmy lawyer from somewhere in Transylvania, who has taken over from poor old Whitelaw; Oystereyes having finally been wheeled away to the red-leather Geriatrics' Ward just across from the H of C. I thought he'd made a promising debut, with plans to bring back the rope, something in my view they should have done years ago. All the wets like Whitelaw and Runcie go on about it being barbaric and so forth, but certainly in the Club people are queueing up to pull the lever, and from a humanitarian point of view I'm told that most killers would prefer to take the short sharp shock any time rather than wither away in jug being visited by that awful old RC chap in the dirty raincoat."
>
> **15 July 1983**

falling about in the background popping off his flashbulbs.

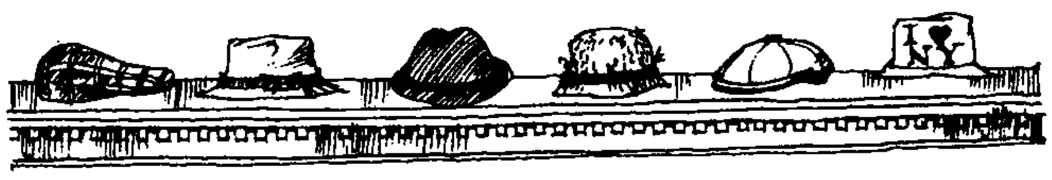
I think we had shaken hands with the entire population of the benighted settlement before the wretched Hunt's better half brightly announced that she had put the kettle on. We were then, if you are still with me, invited to climb into a ridiculous London taxi, and driven off through the minefield to Mon Repos, locally known as Dunshaggin where we are greeted by a smouldering peat fire, tea and rock buns arranged on tasteful doylies. Hunt, catching the light of insanity in my eye, mutters that if I like to accompany him upstairs, he has something that might interest me. This proved to be a captured pair of underpants once belonging to General Menendez, now mounted by his good lady in a pokerwork frame.

Controlling my emotions, I suggested a stroll to stretch the legs after our long ordeal. Resisting the fool Hunt's suggestion of a trek up Mount Tumbledown, I reached the Goose six minutes later, only to find the bar crammed with inebriate reptiles, brasshats, airline stewards and one or two cross-eyed Sheepshaggers of idiotic mien sitting in a corner reminiscing gloomily about the good old days under the Argies when at least they could get a drink.

As I write our time of departure is still very much under wraps, Margaret having toddled off to a small thanksgiving service at the local tin tabernacle and showing every desire to stay on indefinitely. At least, thanks to Mine Host, Bill Voletrouser, I am now well prepared for the return trip, a miniature in every pocket and a fire extinguisher full of the amber fluid for discreet in-flight refuelling.

Yours in transit

Denis



"Old Brer Enoch, weary of sniping at the Boss, decides to go one higher and take a pot shot at the Monarch, accusing her of pandering to the darkies in her Christmas TV show… What Enoch doesn't understand, bless his little cotton socks, poor barmy bugger, is that HM eats, dreams and sleeps all that Commonwealth nonsense, and her idea of bliss is being smothered in garlands and carried through the bush shoulder high by half-naked coons while a lot of little missionary-trained pygmy Johnnies throw their spears in the air and sing God Save The Queen. You don't get the same feeling riding down the Mall in a taxi on a wet Friday afternoon."

27 Jan 1984

"Did you see the old girl doing battle on Panorama? I thought she won hands down, didn't you? The wretched Day was on the ropes from the moment the bell went and by the end so groggy he could barely stand up. I don't want to blow my own trumpet, but I like to think I played some small part in managing the contest. As usual they arrived at Number Ten some time before the show was due to start, and while Margaret was having her nose powdered and the various gorillas were rigging up the lights, I took Brother Day upstairs to show him my golfing trophies in which he unwisely expressed an interest. Once ensconced in the leather armchair and embarked on a non-stop stream of reminiscence - how he pushed Jeremy Thorpe in the river at Oxford, how he outwitted Harold Wilson, how he could be Prime Minister by now if he could have afforded the cut in salary and so forth - he was so busy crowing away that he failed to notice that the tumbler in his right hand which I constantly refilled, laughing and nodding the while, contained a pretty powerful mixture of neat gin and Boris's Moscow Knockout Drops. When the floor manager chappie came up to collect him it took him all of three minutes to find the door, so no wonder Daphne thought he looked a bit sleepy and seemed to find it quite hard to read his own notes."

20 April 1984

"Did you hear my friend Princess Margaret on the wireless being in The Archers? I thought she did jolly well. Her voice sounded completely clear and the way she said 'Good Evening' moved both Boris and me to tears."

29 June 1984

"By the way, did you see that barmy Scotsman in the *Sunday Express* suggested I should be given a peerage for my pains? I was rather touched by that, quite frankly. But if you'd spent any time in the Bar at the House of Lords, you'd share my reluctance to don the ermine. You may think the RAC has some pretty hard cases, but that gaggle of geriatric winos at half-past ten in the morning trying to pick up their tonic bottles make you, me and Maurice look like outpatients."

19 April 1985

Denmarg, Eventide Estate, Dulwich

December 1990

Dear Bill,

Thank you for your case of Krug '08 in celebration of my entering Debrett. I hope you and I will have an opportunity one lunchtime of knocking it back, with Maurice if he has been released into the community by then.

The whole charade started at the Boss's final highly emotional chinwag with H.M. the Q. The D. of E. took me backstage for a snort in the billiard room while the little women dabbed at their noses and wondered what they were going to do without each other. "Well, Thatcher," said the old seadog. "You're a lucky bugger. I only wish someone would gang up on my old woman in a dark alley and toss her on the dustbin of history. What's it to be?" I said I'd like a large brownie. "No, no. What did you fancy in the way of gongs? We'd been thinking along the lines of Duchess of Grantham. You could choose your own courtesy title. They've got a list of names downstairs. Take your pick."

I quite fancied the idea of a Dukedom. I've seen the way they treat that old grog-blossomed party in the plus-fours at Huntercombe - Knockmadoon? Westminster? There's no doubt at all you get quicker service at the bar if you happen to be a Duke, even the Pro calls him "My Grace" and is always kneeling down doing up his shoelaces and breathing on the toecaps. However this was not to be.

In the Limo on the way home I mentioned H.R.H.'s offer to the Mem and the temperature went down by a good hundred and fifty degrees. "Et tu Denis?" I could see she was very displeased. "You too trying to kick me upstairs? That awful place? Pym, Carrington, Waddington? That purgatory where the lost souls of politicians sit waiting for release? No, Denis, no. I am still a young woman, younger than General de Gaulle when he retired from the army. Gladstone was 102 when he formed his final government. There may well come a day when they will remember me and call me back to resume supreme power." You see the sort of thing I have to put up with, Bill, but the old girl's obviously been under a lot of strain.

A couple of days later, however, the topic re-emerges over breakfast. Man in a helmet arrives at the outer gate, a packet from the Palace. It turns out to be a catalogue very kindly sent round by the Duke showing all the different gongs and sashes that are on offer. First few glossy pictures show various old grotesques hobbling about in Cowpat hats including that old bugger who used to traipse round the dirty book shops. However, these were all overstamped "Regret no Vacancies, H.M. the Q." Second on the list was their special offer Order of Merit, a limited edition restricted to "twenty-four Achievers of Distinction in all walks of life". One available due to death of old actor. "That's the one for me," cried the Boss, marking it with her biro. "Look, Sir Winston had one, it is just the very thing." I cast an eye over some of the other owners, and it seemed to be a very rum sort of a bunch. Mostly eggheads and that fiddler Johnny with the talkative wife who's always standing on his head. However, the little woman seemed perfectly satisfied and said, "Let's find something for you, Denis. I know, here's just the thing. Mark will love this, leave it to me."

So it was I discovered that I was to be Sir Denis Thatcher Bart, ie keeping the bloody thing warm for the boy Sir Mark. What really sticks in my craw is M. refusing to be Lady T. So the next time you see us at your Rotarian Rats and Vipers Lunch the Johnny at the door will doubtless bellow out "Sir Denis Thatcher Baronet and Mrs Margaret Thatcher" thus spreading confusion and suggesting the boy Sir Mark is not legitimate.

As you will have seen in the blatts we're on the move again. You may remember I bought Denmarg from that friend of Maurice's with the green Roller after a rather heavy lunch, and I'd taken a good deal of trouble installing the air-conditioned liquor store. Golf course just down the road, very sound neighbours including a nice Greek man in the arms business, American widows etc, everything seemed hunky dory. But even on the way there with M. I could tell things weren't right. She started drumming her fingers on her hatbox and looking out at the traffic in Brixton. "I thought you said it was only fifteen minutes from the House of Commons, Denis! How can I do my bit in the lobbies and help poor little Mr Major to find his feet from this distance?"

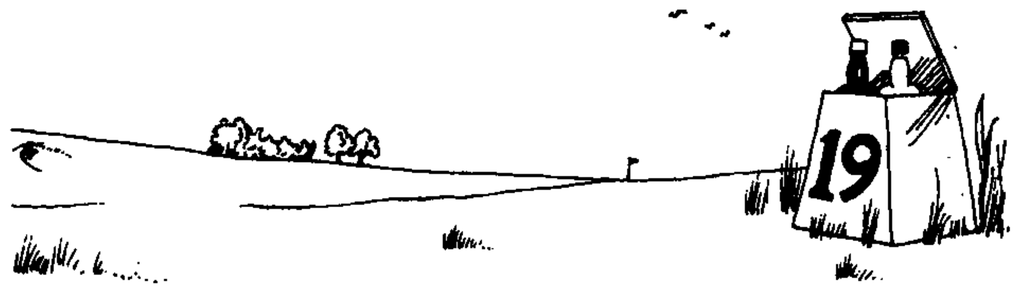
Worse was to come. On our arrival I must have put the plastic card in wrong, and metal teeth rose from the surface of the road to puncture all four tyres. Shortly after that an ear-piercing siren went off, a barrier came down, crushing the top of the car, and armed men appeared. It was therefore a bit of an anti-climax when I led M. in through the front door to the scene I had prepared, with Boris in his new white coat standing by the gas log fire with a bowl of Twiglets and sherry cooling in an icebucket, the legend over the mantelpiece "With best wishes for your Retirement from Mohammed and Slizi Fayed".

M. is still haggling with Central Office over the size of her Alimony Pay-Off, talking in the high millions with a view to buying something a little more central. If you need to reach me I shall be spending the next two weeks at the RAC under the name of Mr Gottlieb.

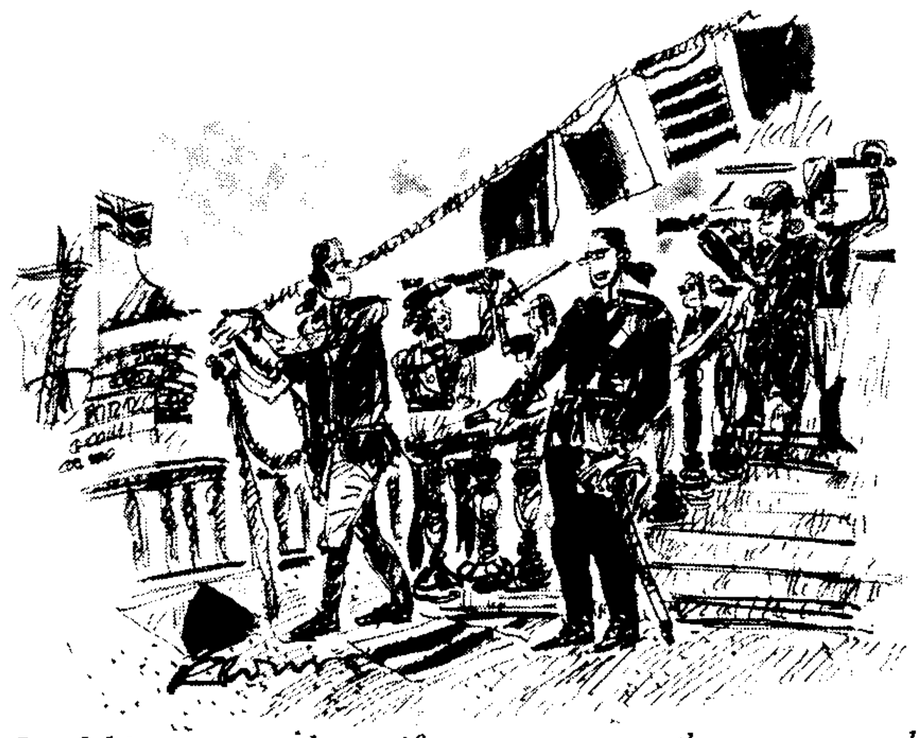
Yours away in a manger,

Denis

PS.Have you heard this riddle? Question: 'What were Denis Thatcher's last words?' Answer: 'He didn't have any; his wife was with him to the end.' Quite amusing, I suppose, if you've had a few.



All illustrations by Brian Bagnall



"His Lordship wants to know if you can sex up the message a bit. Can you put a couple of pairs of bloomers in with the flags?"

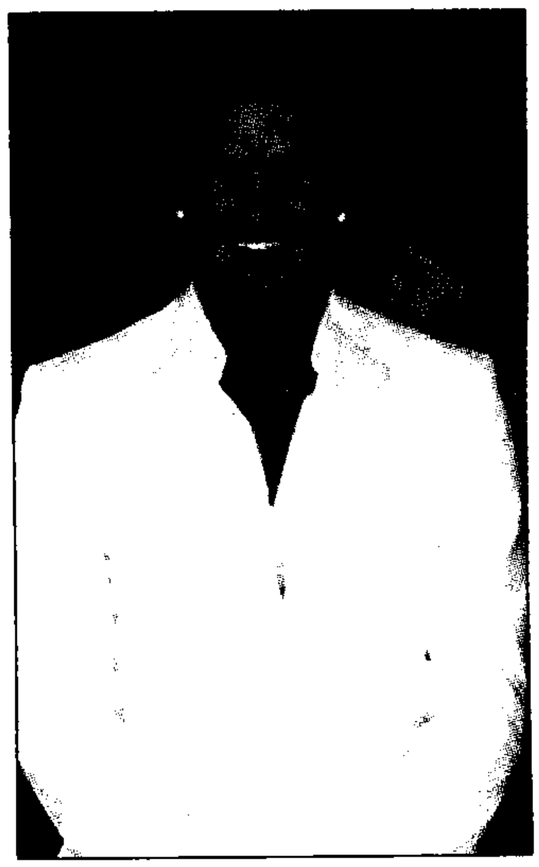
Nursery Times

Friday, 11 July, 2003

POT CALLS KETTLE 'LIAR'

MR ALASTAIR Pot last night accused Mr Kettle of "lying through his spout". Mr Kettle in reply said that Mr Pot had deliberately "cooked up" a story about him in the hope of diverting attention from the fact that he was in the soup.

BECKHAM FIT



MR DAVID BECKHAM was today pronounced 100% fit to sell newspapers. After a series of tests, doctors gave him the thumbs up to take the coveted Page One position in the news line-up, along with Liz Hurley and those three girls from Charlie's Angels and ***(continued on all pages)***

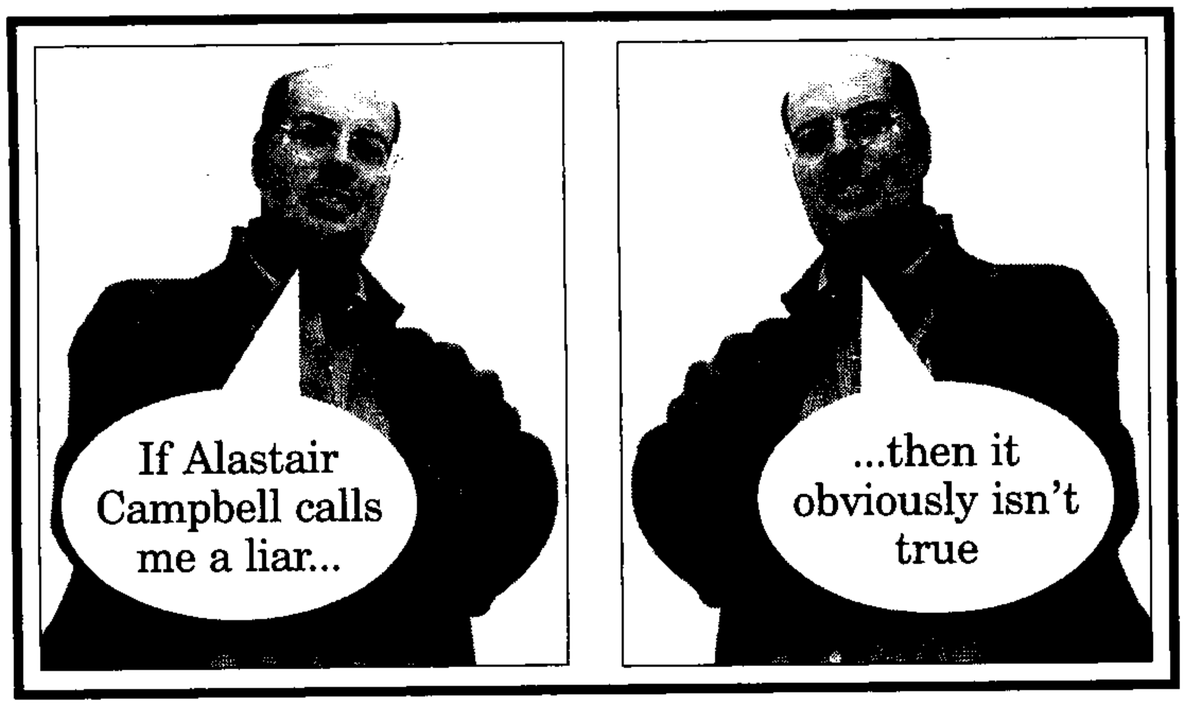
On other pages

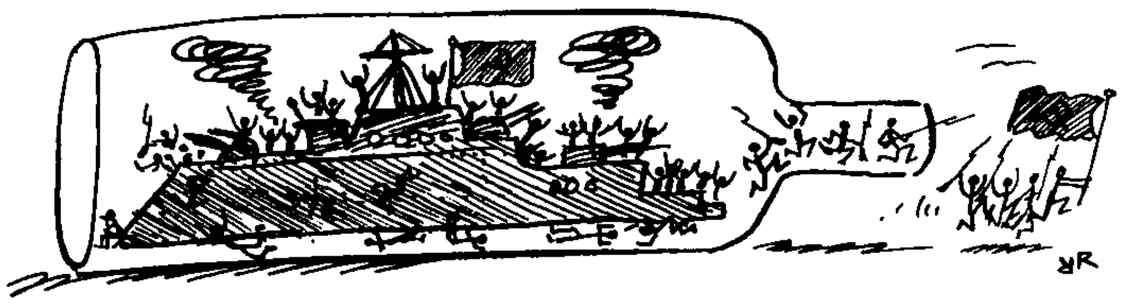
IS TIME RUNNING OUT FOR HENMAN ARTICLES?

AS THE Wimbledon fortnight drew to its conclusion, it soon became evident that time is running out for editors who fill their summer editions with articles discussing the possibility of Tim Henman winning Wimbledon.

A tennis writer said, "The simple fact is, the story's old and not getting any younger – if we're going to run pieces about Henman winning the Men's Singles title, it's going to have to be sooner rather than later."

BBC's Shock Claim





THE BOTTLESHIP POTEMKIN

ROY of the ROUBLES

ROY'S TEAM ARE ABOUT TO GET A NEW RUSSIAN OWNER
APPARENTLY HE KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT FOOTBALL OR CHELSEA
SO WHAT'S NEW?
COME ON YOU IN THE REDS
Fly Emirates
Fly Emirates
EVERYONE IS SAYING I'M DODGY
JOIN THE CLUB
COME ON YOU REDS
J Cooper

BBC Radio 3

Highlights

9.00 Composer Of The Week: Berlusconi

Berlusconi *I Corrupti*, opera highlights sung by Carlo Mafioso (tenor) and Gabrieli Fascisti (soprano) with the Milano Prosecution Service Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, conducted by the composer.

Berlusconi *I Nazi Commandanti*, more opera highlights, including the famous aria *Non Mi Apologetico*, sung by the composer with the orchestra Cosanostra di Palermo conducted by Don Corleone.

10.30 Tomorrow

Soloist Giscard plays the fiddle in **Saint-Saens**' *Carnival of the Crooks.*

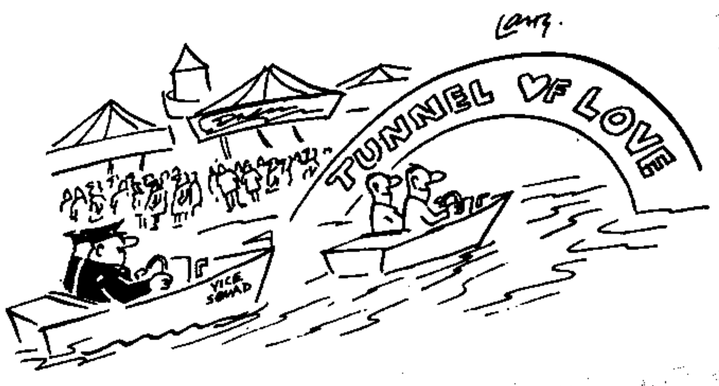
Larry

(Terence Parkes)
1927-2003

Larry's cartoons have been a feature of the magazine for more than forty years.When he joined us in 1963 he had already established his style and reputation with work on *Punch*.

The third *Private Eye Cartoon Library* book in 1974 celebrated his first decade on the magazine. For twenty years he illustrated eleven volumes of Colemanballs and contributed enormously to the success of this series. Much of his work has appeared regularly in the *Private Eye Annuals* and cartoon books.

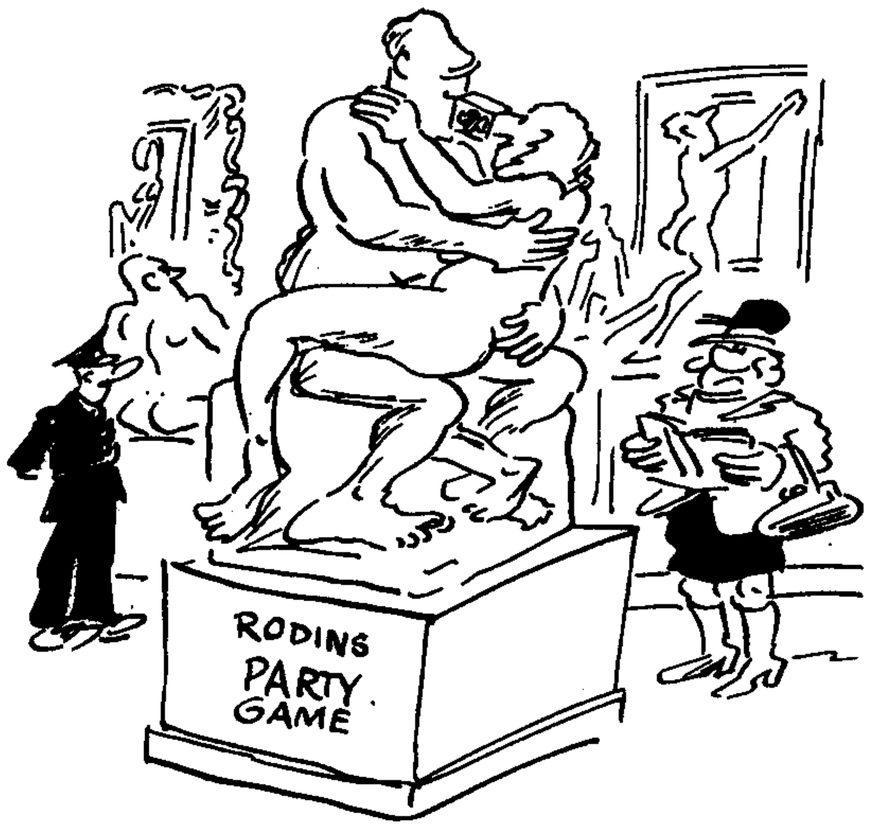
His original drawings have often been exhibited in London at the Chris Beetles Gallery.

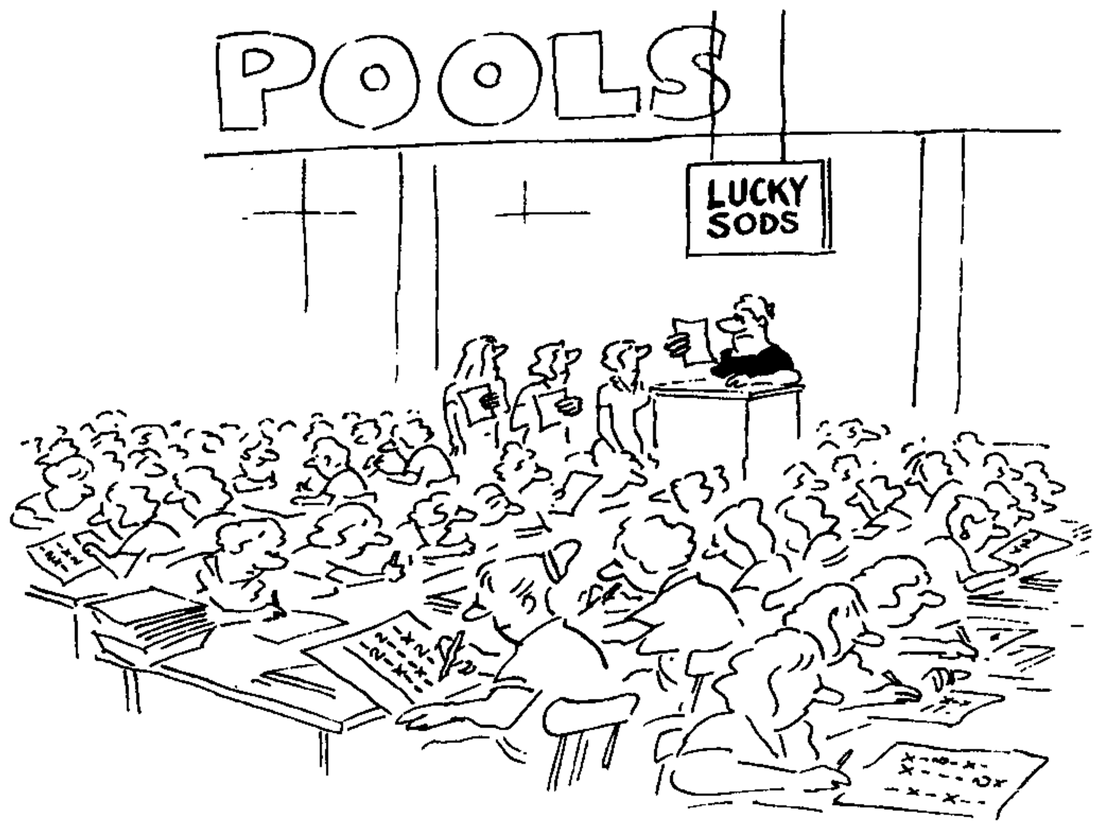


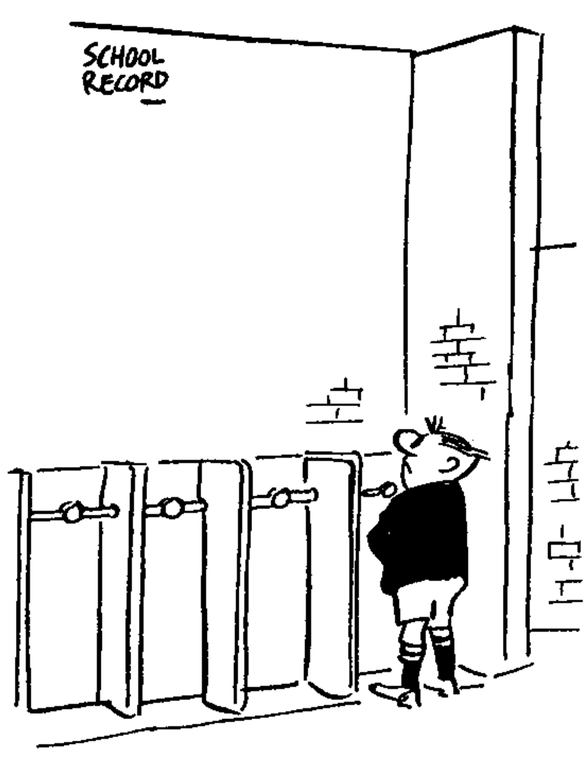
Colemanballs
11

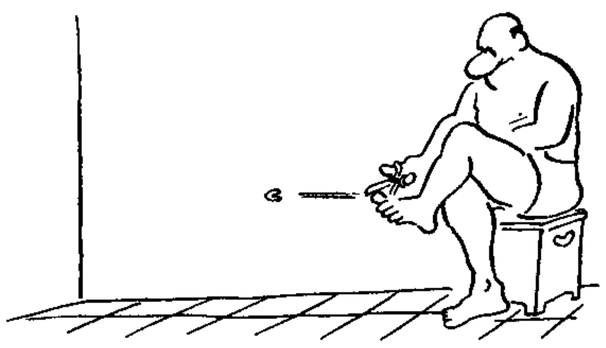
"You had to go inside the tent to understand where the tent was coming from."

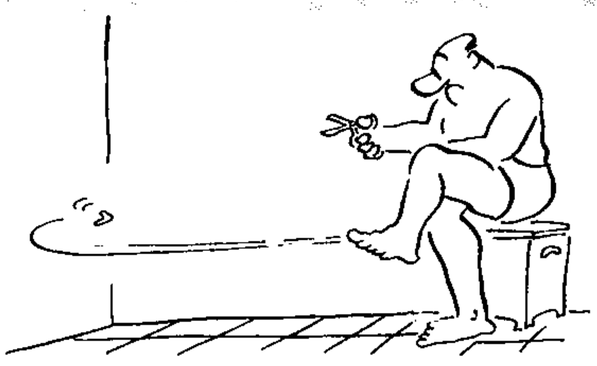
TRACEY EMIN

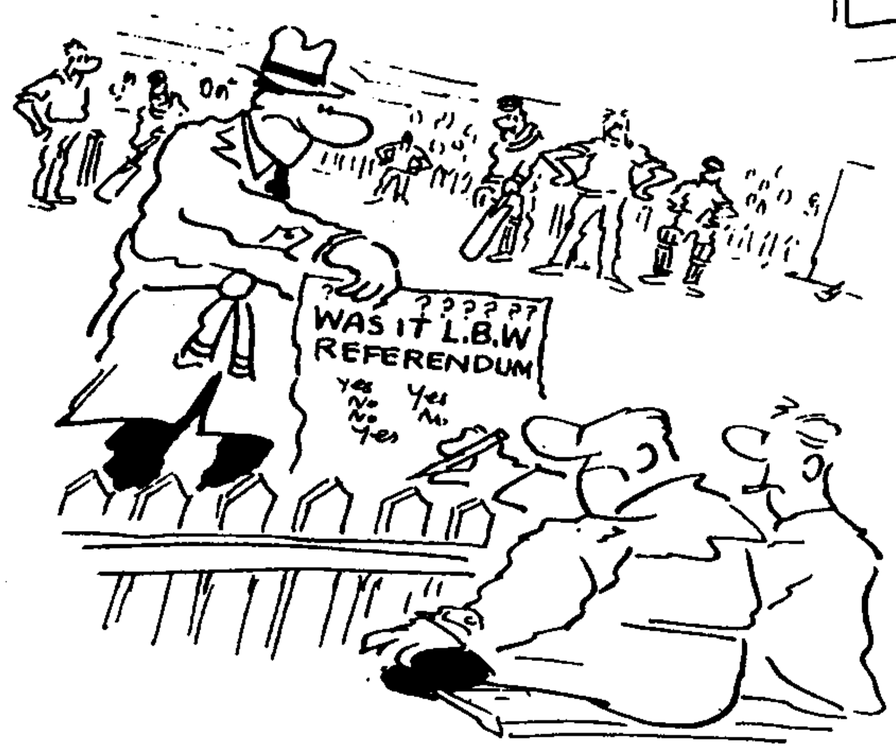


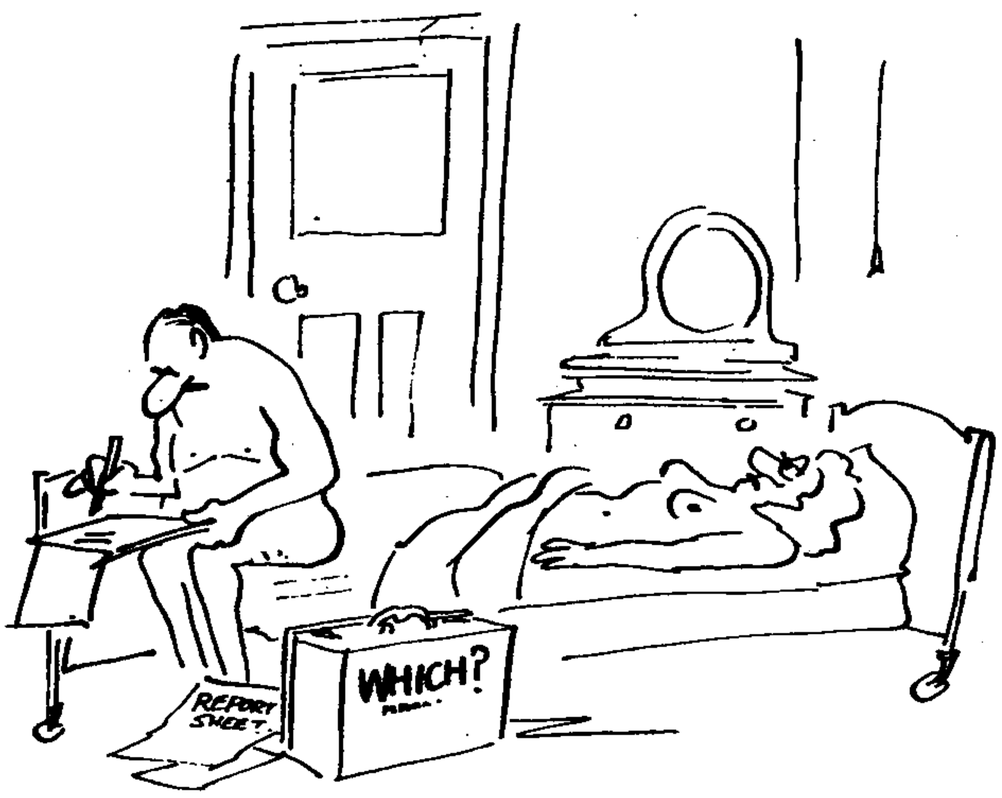








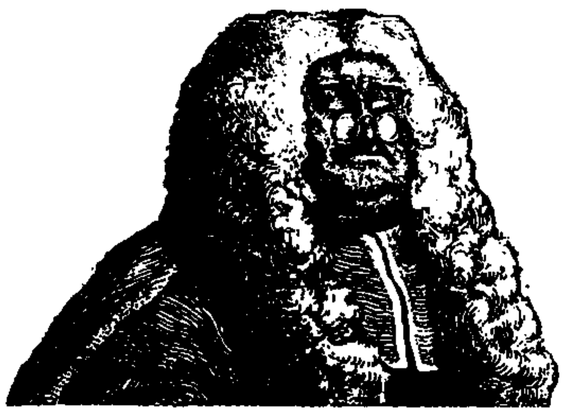




Colemanballs 11

"She just couldn't cope with the game that she didn't have."

VIRGINIA WADE



IN THE COURTS

Lady Archole v. Jane Gaffblower
Day 94

Before Mr Justice Cocklecarrot

Sir Rumpole de Mellor QC *(representing Lady Archole)*: My Lord, I represent one of the most distinguished scientists of our generation, the Lady Archole of Granchester, who is seeking an ex parte writ of *silenciamus* against the defendant, Ms Beanspiller, who used her position as private assistant to Lord Archole, one of the most distinguished *litterateurs* of this or any other age...

Cocklecarrot: Get on with it, Sir Rumpole, there is a very important tennis match I have to attend to.

Sir Rumpole: I am indebted to you. I would like to call my client, the Lady Archole, as my first witness. My Lady, you do, do you not, abhor the attentions of the media whatsoever they may be?

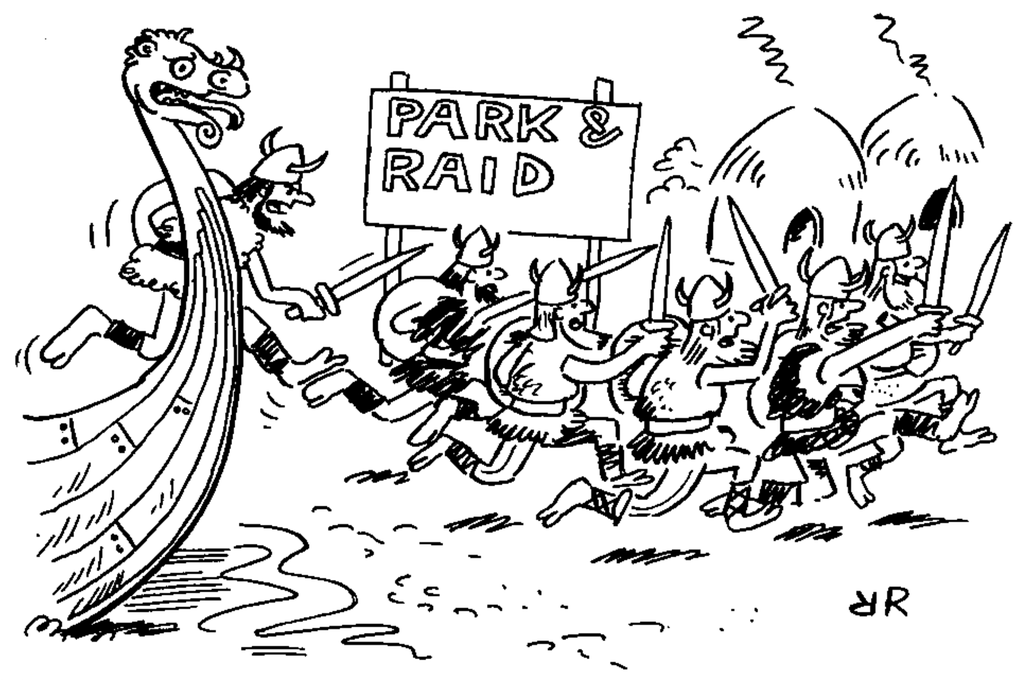
Lady Fragrantia Archole: Indeed, Sir Rumpole. Like my poor, dear late husband, Sir Toad of Toad Hall, so cruelly incarcerated in the deepest dungeon of the stoutest castle in all England for no more than the trifling offence of driving his bicycle without a light...

Cocklecarrot: Dear lady, I submit that you mean a most heinous act of perjury...

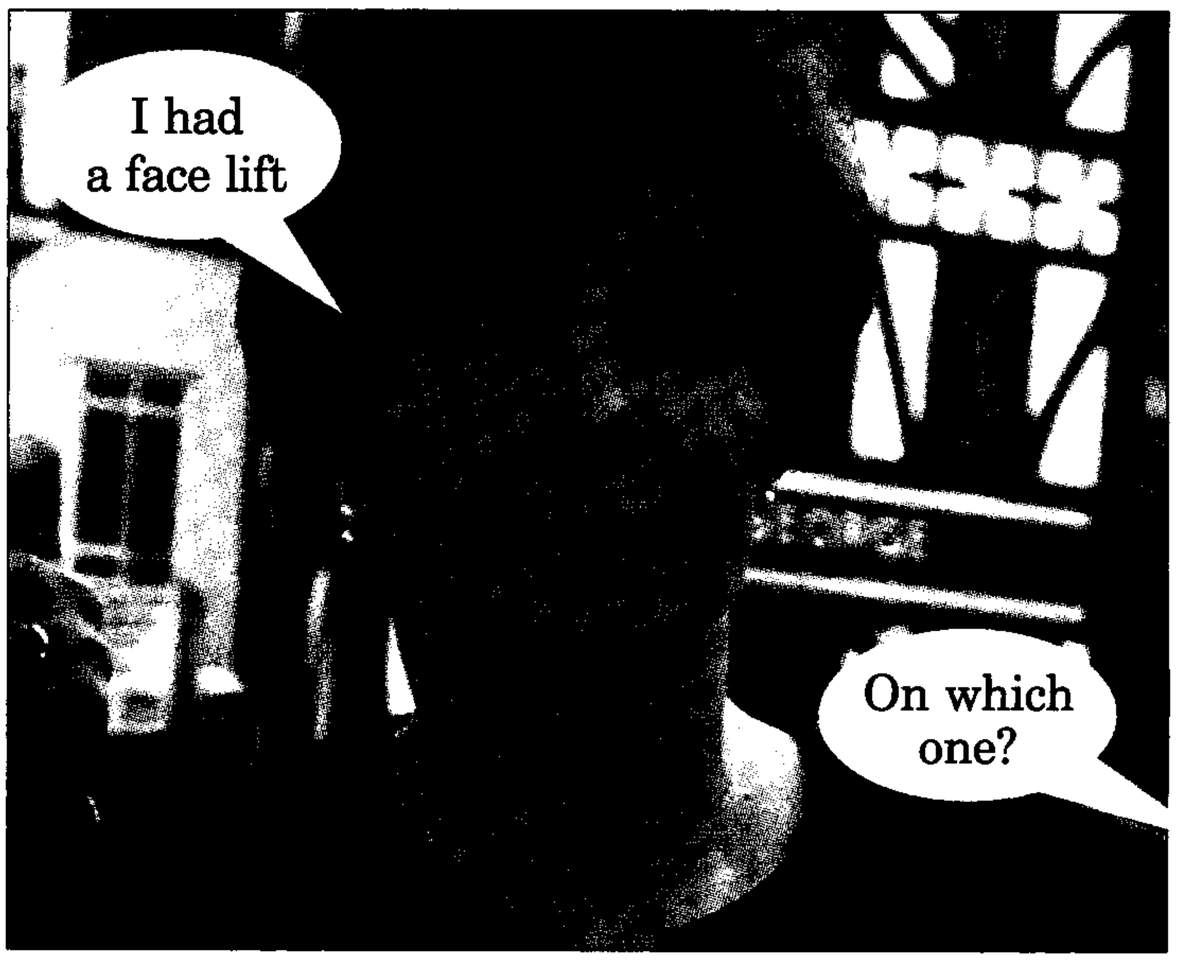
Lady Archole: Be that as it may, My Lord, you must know that so deep is my detestation of publicity of any kind, as I have made clear in countless newspaper interviews, that I have brought this case in a last-ditch attempt to keep my name and my private life out of the newspapers. The very last thing I would wish is to see the details of my recent face lift blazoned across the pages of every tabloid gossip sheet in the nation...

(Hacks rush from courtroom to file 'Lady Archole Admits To Face Lift Shock' stories to every tabloid gossip sheet in the land.)

The case continues...



LADY ARCHER SHOCK



POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam
Connex South East

So. Farewell
Then
Connex South East.

You have been
Sacked.

"We apologise for
The late running of
The 7.19."
That was your catchphrase.

"We apologise for
The cancellation of
The 7.19."
That was another.

Now you really are
'The late
Train service'.

E.J. Thribb
(17½ minutes late)

COMMUTER FURY AT TRAIN STOPPAGE

by Our Transport Staff
Hans Christian Wolmar

ANGRY commuters today hit out at the announcement that Connex South East was to be cancelled.

"This is typical," said one furious traveller. "This decision is three years late. They should have arrived at this conclusion a very long time ago."

The Strategic Rail Authority apologised to passengers for the overdue cancellation of Connex South East and said it was due to "the wrong kind of management".

Train Stationary

They added that a replacement service would be operating shortly. "It is scheduled to arrive within six months, but there are problems with jobs on the line."

DRAIN CANCELLATION

THE Strategic Rail Authority has told Connex that it will not be pouring any more money down the drain.

Girls and boys come out to play in a non-competitive fashion under the supervision of a properly trained and approved adult who has carried out a risk assessment and a health and safety audit always provided there are no exceptional .....
Russell.

Seamus Heaney's 'Beowulf'

as translated by Eminem

Big fucking monster givin
everyone shit

Along comes Beowulf and he
ain't taking it

Kills the motherfucker
Grendel with a big fucking
sword

Then kills the motherfucker's
mother cos he's so fucking
bored.

Writes Seamus Heaney: In this wonderfully energetic recreation of the 8th Century masterpiece, Mr Eminem conveys a sense of spiritual and poetic discovery that we have not known since the work of Bob Dylan and John Lennon. I don't want to "diss" more conventional poetry, but we must admire *(cont. p. 94)*

DIARY

STELLA McCARTNEY

I was born on the 13th September like 1971. I was very small because I was just a baby. At that stage I wasn't like all that interested in fashion. My mum was probably my biggest influence. Mums are everyone's biggest influences, I s'pose. But my mum was my biggest influence basically because she was my biggest influence.

She was the kind of person who didn't give a toss, though in another way she really gave like a toss, probably more than anyone else I know. And that was like really really weird.

What's it like growing up the daughter of Paul McCartney? Why do people always ask that? Is it just because I'm the daughter of Paul McCartney?

Like, in many ways it was kind of normal. I mean, like if you're the kid of the local vicar, then you're, like, the kid of the local vicar, and people say, like, there goes the kid of the local vicar, or whatever, and you're going to be treated like the kid of the local vicar. And it was a bit like that for me, I suppose, only of course, my dad wasn't the local vicar, which might make it a bit different, in a way.

People are like always coming up and they're, like, how's your dad? So I'm like, yeah, how's YOUR dad? I mean, like, why are they always like coming up and saying, like how's your dad? Is it just because I'm the daughter of Paul McCartney? They don't know what it's like growing up the daughter of Paul McCartney. But, hey, I'm not knocking it. I just sometimes wish they'd ask me. But I'm glad they don't, because that would be like really really weird.

Fashion is all about change. And not just change, but staying the same. Like, if I make a scarf, really stylish, really contemporary, really classic, it's sometimes difficult for people for people to get their heads round it. So I'm like, chill, you can't get your heads round a scarf. The scarf has to get its head round yours. Or not its head, because a scarf doesn't like have a head, it's not like human, but try getting your head around a scarf and you'll end up feeling like really really weird. And that's why for me fashion is all about change. 'Cos, like, it's really really weird but the only real way to change is to stay the same. Only different.

I had an idea for these gloves yesterday, and I was like, wow. I really want to be really, really creative and like really push ideas to their furthest creation. My fashion philosophy can be summed up as like, I want to take reality to the furthest reality, as part of the creative process. Because it's only by really pulling ideas into their furthest creative reality that you can find where you're gonna like push them.

I wanted these to be very, very stylish, very, very classic and very, very contemporary. That was my whole philosophy of them, my whole glove philosophy. But first I had all these different like THINGS to work out, 'cos I have always paid very, very close attention to detail, 'cos basically I'm a very-close-attention-to-detail kind of person, that's just the way I am. So first – how many fingers on each glove? I thought about this and like really studied the whole human thing, and eventually I thought like – wow! – yup, it's got to be four fingers and a thumb. And not just four fingers and a thumb on one glove, but four fingers and a thumb on both gloves. And that's not because I've got anything against thumbs. I was always brought up to really appreciate thumbs, and I'm dead against people who are, like, against thumbs. No – it's because if you look at the average human hand and count the fingers and thumbs, like I have, you'll find it's got four fingers and just one thumb, and that is what I wanted to, like, mirror, in my own gloves.

So I rang up my glovemaker and I'm like, a pair of gloves, four fingers and a thumb each, and I want it very, very stylish, very, very classic and very, very contemporary. And she transformed my own distinctive vision into reality. And that was like really really weird.

Buttons. If you design a shirt, it'll need buttons. Most times. Unless it's a t-shirt. In which case it won't. Or not necessarily, anyway. That's my whole philosophy.

So I'm like with my friends Naomi and Kate and Madonna and Gwyneth – to me they're just normal people, like me, like I don't go for that whole "celebrity" thing, they're just normal like people who happen to be Naomi and Kate and Madonna and Gwyneth, though I'm not saying they're not celebrities 'cos of course they are in fact like mega – and so I was with my friends Naomi and Kate and Madonna and Gwyneth and I was like, what shall we do now, and one of them, Kate, I think it was, was like, I know, let's watch some paint dry, that'd be like really really weird.

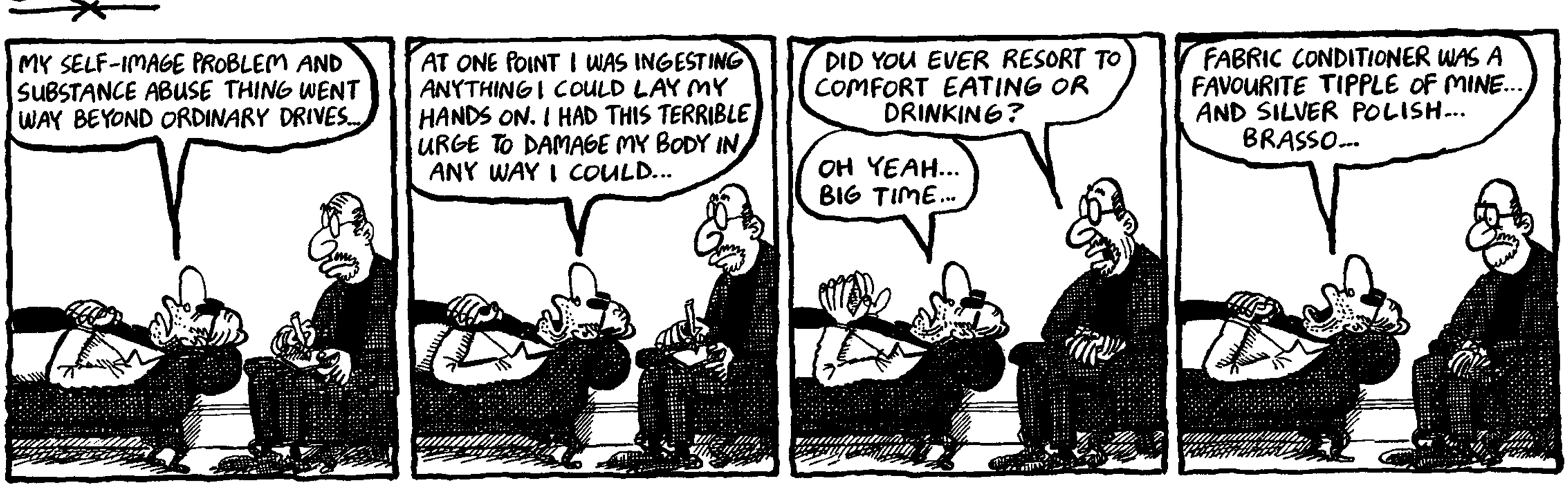
So I get someone to paint like a wall or something, and we just sit there and watch the paint dry, and the whole experience is like very classic, very stylish, very contemporary. And Naomi's like, has the paint dried yet, and I'm like chill, because though the paint is paint in some ways it isn't paint, it's like just COLOUR on a sort of wall. And so we carry on watching it, and it's like rewarding because it's challenging, because it's challenging, and that's rewarding. And that's like really really weird.

What are my plans for the future? I don't think about the future but when I think about the future I'm like, the future's not here and now, and the future's not in the past, the future's like, in the future. And that's like really, really weird.

If I have a baby then I'll definitely be a working mum, but then again being a mum is a full-time job, so I'll have like two full-time jobs, so maybe I'll have to choose between being a mum and working, so the best like compromise is probably to be a working mum. But then again being a mum is a full time job. And that's like really really weird.

The thing about my clothes, like my basic whole creative vision concept, is I want them looking so they're like clothes you already might have but have forgotten about, or clothes you remember having somewhere but can't be bothered to like find, or clothes you would've thrown out if you'd thought of it but you haven't. They're exactly like normal people on the street are wearing – tops, trousers, skirts, dresses – but with a twist. And the like twist is we're talking £800, £900, £1000 for a pair of jeans, and the same for a top – and they don't like even match, which is great. And that's keeping costs really down, 'cos I'm not into the whole "celebrity designer really expensive hype" thing, I'm more interested in the kids on the streets, who could never afford my stuff anyway. And that's like really really weird.

As told to
CRAIG BROWN


MY SELF-IMAGE PROBLEM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE THING WENT WAY BEYOND ORDINARY DRIVES...
AT ONE POINT I WAS INGESTING ANYTHING I COULD LAY MY HANDS ON. I HAD THIS TERRIBLE URGE TO DAMAGE MY BODY IN ANY WAY I COULD...
DID YOU EVER RESORT TO COMFORT EATING OR DRINKING?
OH YEAH... BIG TIME...
FABRIC CONDITIONER WAS A FAVOURITE TIPPLE OF MINE... AND SILVER POLISH... BRASSO...

Literary Review

Metropolitan lines

Going East
Matthew D'Ancona
(Sceptre, £14.99)

TWENTY years ago first novels were generally modest affairs, slim to the point of anorexia, their subject matter a preening compound of Oxbridge lawns, first love and heartache, their achievement a kind of preliminary throat-clearing before the writer moved off to something less conspicuously shackled to his (or her) own brief experience.

Here in 2003 on the other hand, as in so many other areas of publishing, bulk rules. Today's commercial sponsors, those kind gentlemen (increasingly women) at HarperCollins, Random House and elsewhere, don't want deft little slices of gilded autobiography, bless you; they want metropolitan epics (*White Teeth, Brick Lane* etc) gamely alert to the thump and judder of multi-racial London.

All this is rather hard on debut novelists, most of whom, after all, are still learning how to practise their craft, and the consequences – as a novel like *Going East* demonstrates in spades – can be, well, somewhat injurious.

In case you didn't know, *Sunday Telegraph* deputy ed Matthew d'Ancona lives in the East End. This much could already be inferred from various *Torygraph* effusions on the vibrant cosmopolitanism of Bethnal Green and so forth, and is now confirmed by the lavish scenic backdrops of his first novel. The plot goes like this. Mia Taylor is the talented, *soignée* daughter of an immensely well-heeled and semi-patrician clan, five sixths of whose strength is wiped out by a mysterious bomb blast, subsequently marked down as a botched Real IRA attack on the Ulster Loyalist hardliner living next door.

Ad exec Mia, having left the family party to meet an MP client boyfriend at Heathrow, escapes unscathed. Set up for life by a whopping trust fund, she decamps to E2 to rethink her life, filling in time the while at a run-down health-cum-alternative therapy centre bossed by scratchy Sylvia. The past won't lie down, natch, and its visible manifestations – notably Mia's old boss Claude from adland – sow the first seeds of doubt about the family's demise.

Financial whiz-kid brother Ben, for example, turns out to have rubbed shoulders with some very heavy company. Putting aside the attractions of her grimy locale – these include harassed music store owner Ringo and alluring new work colleague Rob – Mia sets out to investigate.

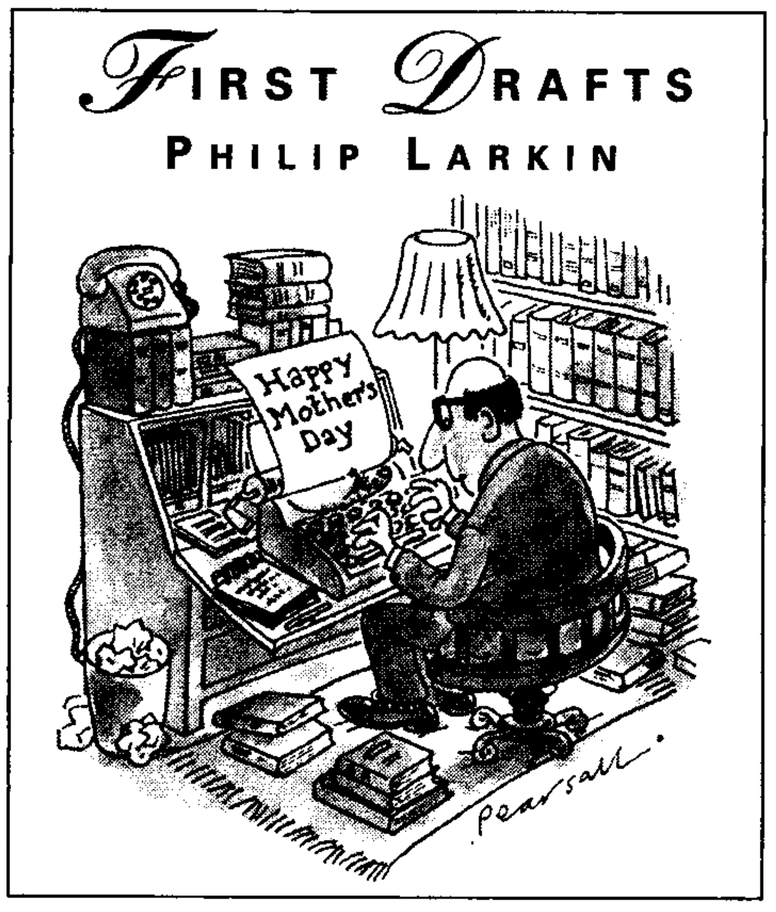
What follows would probably have made a decent little 200 page thriller, occasional *longueurs* redeemed by the local colour. As it is *Going East* weighs in at a corking 400 pages. To extend this modest scenario to about twice its natural length, D'Ancona employs a variety ingenious techniques. There is, for example, the inventory. Thus the Taylors, enjoying a valedictory picnic prior to their ghastly despatch *chez* Ben, are represented as dining off "cold cuts, smoked salmon, a tin of beluga, blinis, salads and her mother's special quiche", not to mention pickles, relishes, cheese and bottles of Badoit.

Then there is the superfluous description: a whole page on sixties leftover Vic, a former worker at the health centre, who barely figures in the plot; the entire set-list run through by Rob's band when they grace the stage of a local pub. All this comes interspersed with a certain amount of brainy reflection ("Mia wondered why it was that there were some things in life that were so instantly and intrinsically irritating. There was the time it took cab drivers to find change..." and away we go down to the end of the paragraph) and one or two Ackroydesque lectures on the historical context.

"Cities survive by heading west in pursuit of the setting sun," our man elbows in to declaim at one point. "They conquer fresh dominions, settle their children, and then, when they can conquer no more, they perish in the cooling desert or in the slow stranglehold of the suburbs. But not London."

No indeedy: London just goes on being vibrant and cosmopolitan. In the end, having contracted a sizzling relationship with hot Rob and prised one or two skeletons from the closets of the dear departed, Mia discovers that the firebombers were neither terrorists nor East End mobsters but Muslim zealots out to nobble her parliamentary boyfriend. Retribution follows.

All highly topical stuff, no doubt, and like the newspaper Mr d'Ancona adorns periodically tumbling over itself in its anxiety to keep to the beat (check out in particular the modern music our man has been grooving to.) And yet in the end I wasn't *completely* convinced by these much advertised "street" credentials. For here and there, amid the string of knowledgeable references to Asian Dub Foundation, Dr Dre and crack whores come some stirring hints as to What Really Matters. In preparing a proper Pimm's apparently you add mint, borage and ginger ale, *not* lemonade. This kind of thing, alas, is a dead giveaway. Even the new East End colonials, you fear, still get their shirts made at Turnbull & Asser. Sadly, the hunt for the male Zadie Smith will have to continue beyond the exalted purlieus of Canary Wharf.



JUST FANCY THAT!

(And so, to save the boys at *Private Eye* the bother, I may as well declare an interest, in that Seaton is one of my editors. If you feel this professional connection fatally compromises my endorsement, then a) that is your loss and b) you obviously don't understand the complications of the editor-writer relationship.)

— Nicholas Lezard on *The Escape Artist* by Matt Seaton, *The Guardian*

Books & Bookmen

■ IT'S pleasing to note that in a dumbed-down age Oxford University Press maintains exacting standards of scholarship.

It has recently celebrated the 100th volume in its sprightly series of "Very Short Introductions". In his volume on *Empire*, Stephen Howe's list of further reading notes that the *Oxford History of the British Empire* is, er, "extremely uneven in scope and quality". So what does he wholeheartedly recommend? Why, the *Cambridge Illustrated History of the British Empire*, of course!

■ MORE on literary agent Carole Blake and the handy book her agency offers to sell wannabe writers who submit manuscripts, *From Pitch to Publication*, by, er, Carole Blake (see *Eye* 1081).

Are minions at the Blake Friedmann agency giving covering letters on submissions to the agency even the most cursory glance? Apparently not.

At least two experienced authors read Blake's book before submitting anything to Blake Friedmann, taking into account all her advice on presentation. Having declared the source of their inspiration in their letters, they were then dismayed to receive by return a standard letter stating that Imelda (she's awfully keen on shoes) is far too busy and important to read submissions from writers but would they like her book at a "bargain" price?

PS: In the last *Eye* Bookworm reported that Waterstone's had contrived to prolong the Manchester employment tribunal hearing of Ben McCrory to four days. Not so, says Mr McCrory: four days was what it took. Lynda Tyson, moreover, is not the manager of Waterstone's Deansgate but of the neighbouring St Ann's Square branch. Sorry about that.

'Bookworm'

Anglican bookshop

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
I'M JK ROWLING'S EDITOR....
HARRY POTTER
... RESPONSIBLE FOR CUTTING AND TRIMMING AND HONING AND FINE TUNING AND MAKING SURE THAT THE PROSE AND STORY-TELLING ARE AS LEAN AND TRIM AND CONCISE AS POSSIBLE SO THAT IT DOESN'T BECOME FAR TOO LONG AND UNWIELDY WITH TOO MANY WORDS AND SENTENCES AND AVOIDS GOING ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND ON AND...

CHESS NEWS

A SERIOUS outbreak of amnesia was evident at last week's creditors' meeting of Brain Games Network Ltd (BGN), the company that was fronted by former Tory party chairman Sir Jeremy Hanley and run into the ground by two of its directors, chess impresario Raymond "the Penguin" Keene and London businessman Alan Lubin (see *Eyes passim*).

The proceedings were opened by Neil Bennett, a licensed insolvency practitioner at the liquidators Leonard Curtis & Co, who read a statement on the history of the company based, he said, on information provided by its directors. When Bennett came to the directors' stated reason for the company becoming insolvent, its former CEO Suzanne Martin burst into uncontrollable laughter.

This was prompted by the ludicrous claim that BGN's insolvency occurred because the company's main asset, some 36 million shares in the hapless Einstein Group, had collapsed to a price of around 0.35p last month when Einstein announced that it could not find a sponsor for a world chess championship match it had been hoping to organise this year. (Einstein finally went into administration last week.)

The BGN directors responsible for this excuse had clearly forgotten that, for most of the past year, Einstein shares were trading below 0.75p, with the highest share price being around 1p. Even at its maximum value during that period, BGN's shareholding would still not have been remotely near the amount needed to offset the company's liabilities, now put at £578,717. In other words, BGN had been trading insolvently for some considerable time, hardly surprising when at least £675,000 had been siphoned off by Keene and Lubin in "fees" and other payments.

The only current director of BGN present at the creditors' meeting, John Gunn, said he did not know whether or not Lubin had a material interest in Giloberg Finance Ltd, the Swiss company that had benefited from most of the money transfers. It was then put to Gunn that Lubin's material interest in Giloberg is a matter of public record, being mentioned in BGN's annual report for the period to 31 December 2000. Gunn's eyebrow-raising reply was that he hadn't read BGN's annual report for that period – despite having been a director of the company since 12 April 2000!

Eventually Gunn decided to resort to the argument that BGN had taken counsel's advice regarding these transactions, to ensure they were above board. Not so. Although counsel's advice was sought over the acquisition by Keene and Lubin of 4 million BGN shares on 20 March 2000, no advice was taken on an equally dubious deal on 15 February 2000, involving the far greater number of 18 million BGN shares. Nor was counsel asked about two payments of £100,000 in May and June 2000, plus some smaller amounts.

It is little wonder that, during the last BGN board meeting before Suzanne Martin was fired as chief executive, Sir Jeremy Hanley expressed serious trepidation. The minutes show that when he asked Suzanne Martin if she thought the accounts would show fraud, she replied "Yes". During that meeting Hanley also said that if the company was insolvent the investors would lose their money and the directors "could get done for negligence".

Now that BGN has finally died, Keene and Lubin are probably hoping that any dirt can be swept under the carpet. But since last week's meeting the liquidator has acquired a package of BGN documents, including some from the company's solicitors and accountants, which could prove highly embarrassing for the Penguin and his chum. Sir Jeremy's fears may yet be realised.

Warballs

"A firm which struggled to cope after Delia Smith praised its omelette pan has gone bust… A spokesman blamed the problems facing the air industry since the 11 September outrage." — *Daily Mirror*.

"We have the insurance renewals that come up for players' personal accidents to complete – which is a vital one. The players' insurance market has hardened since 11 September because it's such a high risk area." — Everton FC secretary Dave Harrison, in *Evertonian* magazine, revealing the Al-Qaeda threat to Goodison Park.

"*Q: My son has earned the rank of Eagle Scout, and I understand the CIA will send him a letter of congratulations upon request?* A: We regret we are unable to process and provide certificates of congratulations to the fine young Americans who have become Eagle Scouts. We have curtailed some activities in order for us to concentrate on the War on Terrorism. Please be assured we will resume the practice when we are able to do so." — from the FAQ section of the CIA website.

Number crunching

170,000

■ Priceless antiquities alleged to have been stolen from Iraqi National Museum

46 ■ Number of items actually missing

THIS ENG-ER-LUND

"There is no better place to score an international hundred than the Oval on a sunlit Saturday: the crowd is a cricket, rather than a corporate, crowd and they bring proper appreciation to the game..."

— Michael Atherton, *Sunday Telegraph*, 29 June.

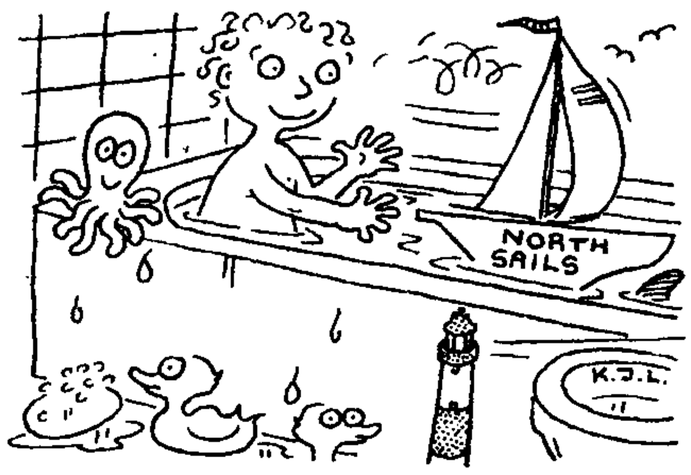
"Eng-er-lund, Eng-er-lund... Fuckin South African cunt... God save our noble Queen… Wanker!... Oi! Rudolph you useless cunt... Stand up if you 'ate the French... Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves... Look at that fat cunt!.. Oo ate all the pies? ... Oo ate all the pies?… Fuckin tossers... Swing low, sweet chariot... FUCKIN' WANKER CUNT!" etc.

— Appreciative comments from spectators in the Peter May stand at the Oval, England v South Africa, afternoon session, 28 June.

"Do you have to bring your homework home with you?!"

MARC QUINN is best known for Self (1991), a model of his head made from nine pints of his frozen blood, now on show at the Saatchi Gallery in County Hall, London. More recently, Quinn created a model of his four-day old son's head, made from his girlfriend's liquidised placenta.

Guardian Magazine



The essence of the world of sailing.
The sea as trend and expression of vitality.
Fresh, natural and spontaneous.
A play of pleasurable sensations that hearkens masculine refinement
Interpreted along the lines of the most feminine desires.
Technicality transformed into daily comfort and a synthesis of distinction.

From 'North Sails' boating catalogue

When the letters of support flooded in after I wrote about Ronnie's death, I wasn't, at first, ready to open my home and my heart to another cat. Ronnie was still my phantom limb.

Pseuds Corner

I knew I wouldn't be ready until I could walk past the prawns section in Marks and Spencer without crying.

AMANDA PLATELL
Daily Telegraph

You can almost taste the excitement as Anna Mouglaslis, the white-hot French film star and Karl Lagerfield's new muse, stalks round a stark studio behind the Boulevard St Germain waiting to be photographed by the designer himself. She is dressed in tiny Chanel hotpants, pearls the size of Maltesers, and nothing else but a smile.

"Anna is amazing: even naked she doesn't look naked," says Lagerfield with the cool detachment of the connoisseur.

Times Magazine

Among the most thought-provoking analogies postulated by Barenboim is that our current inability to solve profound humanitarian problems is akin to the cowardice of many present-day performers who lack the nerve to observe to the letter Beethoven's idiosyncratic dynamic marking of crescendo followed by a subito piano.

ERIK LEVI reviewing Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said, Parallels and Paradoxes, Explorations of Music in Society, BBC Music Magazine

Pseuds Corporate

Berwickshire Housing Association

Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council

Have formed a Strategic Procurement Alliance

This partnership will deliver synchronised Capital Building Programmes through a "Partnering Charter" based on principles by Sir John Egan's "Rethinking Construction" Task Force.

Key Performance Indicators will form drivers for the delivery of the joint programme to Budget, on Programme and aim to achieve Zero Defects in an equal stakeholder, blameless culture.

Programmes of work will be offered on an annual basis within the Partnership, consisting of Replacement Windows, Kitchen, Bathrooms, Heating Systems and other Property Attribute Replacements... This is a sequential and annual phased programme subject to continuous and self appraisal by all the Partners.

Advertisement,
Berwick Advertiser

CONTRIBUTORS: David French, Andrew Johnston, Marisa Pettit, E. Viner, Duncan Hunt, Tony Hacker.

£10 paid for all entries

IN THE BACK

RED (FACED) DAWN

IT WAS paymaster-general Dawn Primarolo's turn to appear before the treasury select subcommittee last week to answer questions about the Mapeley affair, the tax credit foul up and the mystery of the suspended national insurance deficiency notices.

Red Dawn kicked off her evidence by announcing a massive review of all the tax collection bodies, including, not surprisingly, plans for "a new framework of accountability" for those working in the tax agencies – especially concerning reporting exactly what's going on to ministers.

She was able to clear up some confusion caused by Sir Nicholas Montagu's evidence two weeks earlier over the contract signed in the name of John Prescott which made it clear that the revenue's buildings were being sold to a company based in a the tax haven of Bermuda. The contract was signed – not, as Sir Nick's team had suggested, by Prescott's officials – but by Inland Revenue officials who were already aware of the company's tax status. Primarolo told the committee that the officials had had the delegated powers to do so. The committee expressed its scepticism that it was appropriate for a £370m flagship contract to be signed by officials with no ministers being briefed.

Dawn Primarolo

Primarolo was forced into a stammering repetition of the fact that it "was a mistake and the lessons need to be learned".

Committee chairman Michael Fallon accused Primarolo of having "lost control" of the agencies, especially the Inland Revenue which has had to apologise for failing to keep ministers informed both of the embarrassing details of the Mapeley contract and the six-year suspension of deficiency notices. Treasury ministers have admitted to the House of Commons that they did not know anything about the suspension, which came under their purview after the Contributions Agency moved from the DSS to be taken under the wing of the Inland Revenue in 1999.

As for the tax credits fiasco, Primarolo promised that now that the system itself was on track, the treasury would be "talking" to computer firm EDS about some form of compensation for the IT failings which left hundreds of thousands of families without the money they were expecting.

The review could see huge change for the Revenue, with the paymaster-general telling the committee that a merger with HM Customs and Excise and complete reorganisation had not been ruled out.

PRISON CONDITIONS

Sloppy response

TEENAGED girls must continue the outdated practice of "slopping-out" in prisons despite serious health risks, a high court judge has ruled.

The Howard League for Penal Reform, representing a pregnant 16-year-old in a mixed prison for adult women and juveniles, had asked the court to rule that the girl should be let out of her cell at night when she needed to use the toilet. Thirty 15- and 16-year-old girls at the prison, which cannot be named to protect the identity of the girl who took legal action, are locked in their single-room cells for 12 hours overnight.

Although the prison is fitted with an electronic unlocking buzzer system, it can take up to three hours before a girl is allowed out of her cell, so they are provided with chamber pots in case they need to use the toilet during that period. In the summer heat, the smell can become rather pungent by morning, meaning some of the young prisoners empty their pots out of the windows, splattering on to windows below. There are no wash basins in the rooms, even though a number of the girls have infections such as hepatitis.

Howard League director Frances Crook said: "There ought to be enough staff so that the girls can be unlocked to allow access to the facilities. And of course if you're pregnant you're constantly needing to go to the toilet."

The league lost its judicial review on 27 June and it was ruled that the prison service could continue to use the chamber pot system. The practice of slopping-out was supposed to have been ended in all prisons in 1996 after it was described by senior figures in the prison service as "inhumane". It is only supposed to be allowed in exceptional circumstances even in adult prisons. But since 1996 the prisons inspection service has criticised several prisons for reintroducing chamber pots, rather than letting prisoners use proper facilities at night in those prisons without cell toilets.

WAR CRIMES

DynCorp dividend

WHILE the United States is bullying countries into signing bilateral immunity agreements that exempt its soldiers from prosecution for war crimes by the international criminal court (ICC), it is now insisting immunity should cover staff working for a British company too, the *Eye* can reveal.

The ICC, which has the power to try those accused of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, is one of the few issues that divide Tony Blair and US president George W. Bush. Blair is an enthusiastic supporter; but not so Dubya, who refuses to recognise it.

In Colombia, where the private military company DynCorp has a contract with the US state department to spray weedkiller on the cocaine fields, DynCorp staff regularly become involved in firefights with guerrillas. Though DynCorp is US owned, the Colombian contract is run through its British subsidiary, DynCorp Aerospace Ltd of Aldershot. The Colombian government has been asked to exempt its staff from possible prosecution; but boldly it has refused and talks with the US have temporarily folded.

Bosnia – encouraged no doubt by the US threat to cut off $73m in aid and withdraw all its troops – *has* signed an agreement with the US, however. It goes beyond US troops to include all Americans in Bosnia and any third country nationals working for US military missions. However, Bosnian officials claim to have gained two concessions: third country nationals working for other US institutions apart from the military and Bosnians working for any US employer can still be prosecuted by the ICC.

DynCorp, via its UK subsidiary, is one of the leading military contractors in the region. It clearly loomed large in negotiations in Bosnia, where some of its staff have been involved in sex trafficking and prostitution.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

Great Korea move

TONY BLAIR goes to the Far East next week where the hot topic will be North Korea and nuclear proliferation. But will anyone mention the awkward fact that, via British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) and its wholly-owned American subsidiary Westinghouse Electric Company, we have been supplying Kim Jong Il with nuclear technology for several years now?

This has been happening with the blessing of the countries that are now so concerned about North Korea's nuclear ambitions – Japan, the US and South Korea. Indeed, until a few weeks ago, and while president George W. Bush was confronting the North Koreans, the US administration was still approving the exchange of technology and training documents from Westinghouse.

The technology transfer relates to contracts with a South Korean consortium to build two nuclear reactors to generate electricity in the north. The consortium is using technology and components developed by Pittsburgh-based Westinghouse, which BNFL acquired in 1999. Construction started last August.

Concern centres on North Korea's ability to convert its civil nuclear programme into plutonium bombs; and it was Kim's decision to kick UN inspectors out of his country's Yongbyon nuclear plant and restart the reactor which triggered the current crisis.

Asked in March about BNFL's North Korean connections, the UK government said it "has no contractual commitments to provide two nuclear reactors for North Korea". But it went on to explain how its Westinghouse subsidiary was under contract with companies in South Korea to manufacture components and help with the system design in respect of the light-water reactors to be supplied to North Korea by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organisation (KEDO). This falls under the framework agreed as part of Bill Clinton's "food and fuel" deal in 1994 in return for non-proliferation. KEDO is part-funded by the United States, South Korea, Japan, the EU and others.

BNFL was more forthcoming than the government. The reason the deals had the blessing of the US and the EU is that building reactors the Westinghouse way apparently reduces North Korea's ability to subvert the technology for weapons use.

US Republicans have blamed the Clinton deal for today's nuclear confrontation; but the Bush administration has been happy to extend Westinghouse's licence to continue transferring nuclear technology. Until now that is.

FOLLOW-UPS...

■ **CLIVEDEN:** National Trust bosses battling with Buckinghamshire villagers over plans for a housing estate on land they are supposed to protect for the nation (*Eye* 1083) may have overlooked the fact that a large number of the opponents are long-time NT members.

The trust wants to stick a 192-property estate on the site of a former hospital at Cliveden. Although the land is technically brownfield, it is surrounded by protected greenbelt. Handing the estate to the nation in 1942, Viscount Astor wrote to the National Trust: "I have given up on my behalf and on behalf of future owners the right of converting it into a speculators' building estate."

As NT members, the campaigning residents of Taplow have the right to propose a motion to the trust's AGM later this year. So far more than a dozen have done so. Now, the formal motion deploring the scheme will have to be sent to the tens of thousands of NT members in the AGM notice, drawing attention to this bizarre move by the Trust to turn into a property developer.

Bradford & Bingo

NEWS arrives concerning Christopher Rodrigues, the chief executive of Bradford & Bingley and a director of telecom company Energis who was appointed to the board of the Financial Services Authority by Alistair Darling when he was chief secretary to the treasury.

Rodrigues' qualifications for helping run the UK's top financial watchdog became clear last July when Energis went bust and was put into administration. Rodrigues then left the Energis board, even though a press release from the treasury on 1 April this year wrongly claimed he was still an Energis director.

A new management, led by Tory MP Archie Norman, is now running Energis as a private firm. At the end of June it revealed that accounting under Rodrigues and fellow directors had been "aggressive" and had borne "no relationship with underlying reality". Labour costs were apparently treated as if they were capital assets; real assets were given excessively long lives in the accounts, implying lower replacement costs; and there was not enough provision for bad debt. The effect was to inflate the firm's profits.

The new Energis management has sacked auditor PriceWaterhouseCoopers and will stop these odd practices, although it has not referred them to accounting regulators and does not allege improper conduct.

Private Eye asked the FSA if a man responsible for these accounting practices should really be running a financial regulator. Initially the FSA said "no comment", but later a spokesman said: "The FSA considered whether there was an incompatibility between Mr Rodrigues' membership of the boards of the FSA and Energis. This was in relation to the FSA's regulation of the listing rules. We concluded there was not."

Private Eye also approached Bradford & Bingley, where Mr Rodrigues remains chief executive. Rodrigues said he would keep Bradford & Bingley mutual, but when members voted to become a plc, he stayed in charge and saw his salary rise by a couple of hundred grand to £771,850 a year. The firm took a relaxed attitude to the Energis revelations saying they were a "non-issue". So that's all right, then.

POLICE 5

Cops cop it

NINE years after former traffic cop Sultan Alam was arrested and charged with conspiracy to steal car parts, he finally looks set to clear his name. Three serving Cleveland officers and a former detective inspector have been charged with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice in his case.

Mr Alam, 40, who was the only Asian officer in the force's traffic division, was convicted at Teesside crown court in 1996 and sentenced to 18 months in jail. He has always maintained he was fitted up by colleagues, but just before his trial lost his case alleging discrimination against Cleveland police.

A long investigation by the police complaints authority (PCA) codenamed Operation Granite finally resulted in a file containing allegations against 12 Cleveland officers being sent to the crown prosecution service (CPS). In May it decided not to proceed against eight of them, but last week announced the charges against the remaining four.

Mr Alam, who says the case wrecked his marriage and career (he now drives a taxi), hopes the appeal court will now quash his conviction.

TAX DODGING

Marks & Sparks will fly

EXPANDING your business on to the continent can be risky – as Marks & Spencer discovered having spent 30 years dealing with the fall-out of its financially disastrous decision to open stores in France, Belgium and Germany.

Nevertheless, M&S is trail-blazing a tax avoidance tactic that could make the move into Europe practically risk free. M&S managers are attempting to set their European losses against the profits their stores still make in Britain.

The amount they sought to "offset" on their British tax was £30m. The attempt, backed by the celebrated tax dodger's accountant KPMG and the usual expensive tax barristers, has been strenuously opposed by the Inland Revenue on the rather obvious grounds that the Revenue never sought or intended to gather tax in Britain for any profits made by Marks and Spencer (or any other company) in another country.

Despite the heroic arguments of tax QCs Graham Aaronson and Paul Farmer, this view was upheld by the Inland Revenue's special commissioners. The diligent M&S and KMPG lawyers promptly appealed against the commissioners' decision; and in the high court Mr Justice Park sent the case to the European court of justice.

Most experts in the Revenue and treasury secretly believe that in the current mood of judicial pan-Europeanism, the European court will overrule the commissioners and give M&S the money – catastrophic for the Revenue and the government. Scores of companies are already lining up to cash in on this decision. Roughly speaking, it could mean that any British company that makes profits in Europe wouldn't have to pay tax in Britain on those profits, but any company making losses in Europe could claim tax relief here on those losses. No one knows how much this will cost the exchequer, but gloomy predictions in the treasury, to the horror of chancellor Gordon Brown, point to a likely drain of several billion pounds.

On 23 May the Inland Revenue announced on its website the setting up of a group litigation order, which could be joined by any other company who wanted to "piggy-back" on the M&S law suit in Europe. The website invited companies who wanted to join this lucky group to submit their names to an official at the high courts of justice, a Mrs Vicky Bell.

The *Eye* asked Mrs Bell for a list of likely litigants. She confirmed she had the list but was reluctant to part with it, referring us instead to the solicitors representing the proposed litigants, the City firm of Dorsey and Whitney. Senior partner Michael Anderson said the list was protected by client confidentiality and while he was willing to ask the firms if they would give up their anonymity to *Private Eye*, it was rather unlikely.

The lawyers are likely to propose to the high court that the names of the litigants be kept confidential, meaning the would-be tax dodgers can keep a low profile even when the case reaches the courts.

OFFSHORE WORKING

It's rigged

A NORTH Sea oil rig worker, wrongly fingered for highlighting a food poisoning scare, is to take his employers to a tribunal after they helicoptered him back to the mainland and told he was "not required back" at work.

The man, who does not wish to be named, was employed by a contractor working for British Gas and is represented by the Offshore Industry Liaison Committee (OILC), the trade union for offshore workers.

Staff on the rig had raised concerns about the quality of food and drink, which were investigated by management. After the installation manager told the crew that there was a suspected E-coli contamination, someone on the rig made a late night telephone call to Grampian television. The worker who lost his job over the incident, who was alleged to have been seen near the payphones, denies placing any call to the media.

Workers on offshore installations do not have the same employment protection rights as those on the UK mainland even though they continue to pay UK tax and national insurance. "Not Required Back" is such a common practice in the offshore industry it is referred to as being NRB'd. However, the tribunal in Aberdeen does have jurisdiction to decide whether this worker's NRB notification constituted wrongful dismissal.

"It's a huge problem for offshore workers," said Jake Molloy, general-secretary of OILC. "Anyone who speaks out on health and safety matters or industrial relations is simply not required back at the operator's whim."

OILC hopes to demonstrate that British Gas can be held directly responsible by the tribunal, since the contractor's worker was directly answerable to the British Gas-employed installation manager and British Gas's contract with the contractor allowed it to sack workers.

The tribunal is listed for September.

Pie in the sky

DEFENCE secretary Geoff Hoon gave a major speech last month to the Royal United Services Institute in which he announced that "conflict between states is likely to become rarer" but the army would have plenty to do dealing with "terrorism" and "the threat from non-state actors".

The message does not seem to have reached the ministry of defence, however. A day before Hoon's speech it announced that it was spending £1bn to develop a ground-based air defence system. According to the MoD, this radar-and-rockets combo will protect troops from "attack helicopters, cruise missiles and unmanned air vehicles".

Private Eye asked the MoD which enemies currently have these weapons. After a long pause the answer came: "The new system provides round-the-clock capability in a cost-effective layered system able to deal with difficult-to-counter threats like cruise missiles. The assessment phase will deliver an operationally robust system." Pressed on who might use cruise missiles or attack helicopters against us (they're not al-Qaeda's weapons of choice and weren't present in the more conventional war with Iraq), the MoD said Iraq was "just one conflict".

According to the ministry, there was "always the threat as numerous countries around the world have an air capability" so the possibility of attack with these weapons "cannot be ignored".

So, even though massive air superiority or the weakness of the enemy meant the UK faced no attack helicopters in all its recent conflicts in the Balkans, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, the Congo or Iraq, the army is spending £1bn on developing a defence against them. The MoD spokesman "did not want to name names" of possible enemy countries, but was sure there are plenty waiting in the wings. To be fair to arms manufacturers, the MoD is splitting the cash and giving £40m each to Frances Thales and America's Lockheed to begin the work.

You can contact Paul Foot on 020 7287 3183 or the In the Back team on 020 7437 4017

In the City

ONLY the shortlived dotcom billionaires made money as fast as the Russian oligarchs who emerged as the new super-rich robber barons from the bandit capitalism that followed the collapse of communism. But unlike their mainly American rivals, the Russians made their money in a more old-fashioned and less illusory way.

However, just as the dotcom billions were a triumph of hope over experience, so the Russian billions too rely on a potentially flawed assumption: the continued goodwill of President Vladimir Putin and those around him.

Two ex-oligarchs – Boris Berezovsky and Vladimir Gusinsky – have already felt Putin's power. Now it is the turn of Russia's richest man and would-be Putin rival, oil boss Mikhail Khodorkovsky, with the arrest on his hospital bed of his Yukos ally, Platon Lebedev.

Putin made Gusinsky an offer he could not refuse: he would "let him live" so long as he sold his media interests to Putin allies and went into exile. The same offer could come to Berezovsky who, as Gusinsky did in Spain, now faces extradition from Britain. Berezovsky has already sold certain of his assets in Russia.

Putin's ace, which he has played once again with Lebedev, is to reopen the skeleton-jammed "rip-offski" saga of the Russian privatisations under Boris Yeltsin which formed the basis of the oligarchs' sudden wealth. Behave and support me, says Putin, and we won't go there; misbehave and, like Lebedev, the charge is theft of state assets (a charge founded in the 90s "loans for shares" scandal whereby the circle of businessmen around Yeltsin ended up buying state-owned assets for a fraction of their true value).

Which brings us to why Roman Abramovich, a Berezovsky protégé and to date Putin ally, would want to sink £160m into premiership soccer club Chelsea. The tidal wave of PR-inspired tosh (love of fun/football/Chelsea/Britain, plans for world football domination, etc) about the tsar of Stamford Bridge unleashed by the "surprise" deal failed to answer this simple question.

Russians like trophies, especially foreign or moveable trophies. Homes, yachts, jets. They also like Swiss or offshore bank accounts which are also out of reach of the Russian taxman who too often takes his instructions from the Kremlin.

The new robber barons also crave respectability and popularity – items usually in short supply back home. So like their American forebears Carnegie and Rockefeller, they are big on charity. Abramovich is an everyday Santa Claus to the reindeer people of Russia's potentially oil and gold rich Arctic province of Chukotka. And what is more populist than football, where you can be worshipped for your cheque book by myriad fans and unquestioning newspaper acolytes?

Abramovich began the process of moving control of his assets outside Russia when he formed Millfield Capital in 2001. Millfield is said to hold his shares in Sibneft, about to be cashed in via a merger with Yukos, Russian Aluminium and smaller industrial interests. These have been reduced recently with the reported sale of his stakes in the ORT TV station and Aeroflot, the former bought from Berezovsky.

Chelsea and its prime property assets will be outside Putin's control, as will the up to $3bn expected by its "core shareholders" from the Sibneft sale.

Whether Abramovich intends to follow the Mohamed Fayed/Jack Walker/John Hall/Jack Hayward trail of wasting millions in pursuit of soccer silverware remains to be seen. His reputation suggests he is an unlikely devotee of vanity investing. But the football drug is hard to kick given the adulation it brings.

For a business that has allowed Fayed and the pension pillager Robert Maxwell to own clubs to suddenly talk about a "fit and proper" test for Abramovich is laughable – especially at Chelsea with its history under Bates of unknown (ha, ha) offshore owners. But there are legitimate questions which should be asked of the new Chelsea owner arising out of his previous business dealings and connections which went either unasked or unanswered or both during his series of "exclusive" interviews with gushing hacks.

First there are the investigations and litigation connected with Runicom, an offshore network of companies in at least Switzerland and Gibraltar with which Abramovich has been closely associated ever since it acquired a stake in Sibneft in 1996. Berezovsky orchestrated the 1995 $100m loan which enabled him, Abramovich and banker Aleksander Smolensky to obtain control of Sibneft a year later. Runicom began life as an oil trader handling, often exclusively, supplies from Sibneft and other Russian oil companies.

Runicom is at the centre of a continuing legal wrangle with the London-based European Bank for Reconstruction & Development which claims it is owed $58m including penalties and interest. EBRD was established to bankroll new businesses in post-Communist Russia. It lent $14m in 1998 to Smolensky's now defunct Moscow bank SBS-Agro which played a key role with Berezovsky in acquiring control of Sibneft via the "loans for shares" scam. EBRD says that when SBS-Agro could not repay, it assigned to it an overdue loan from Runicom. Runicom says the loan had been repaid in 1998. Thwarted in collecting by the Russian courts, EBRD is now trying to get the money through legal action elsewhere.

Runicom also featured in the investigation into what happened to $4.8bn loaned to Russia by the International Monetary Fund in 1998, supposedly to support the soon devalued rouble. Swiss investigators raided Runicom's offices in Montreux and Fribourg in 1999 after allegations that $1.4bn had been paid into its Swiss accounts via the Bank of New York. This was vehemently denied as ridiculous by Runicom and Sibneft. The Swiss investigation resulted in no charges. The IMF and Russia said they were satisfied no money was misappropriated. But earlier this year it was reported that the Russian prosecutor-general was reviewing the case.

Runicom also surfaced in the 1999 Bank of New York investigation launched by US prosecutors into allegations that $7.5bn had been moved out of Russia via accounts at the American bank. Runicom was said to have made payments into BNY Cayman Islands accounts belonging to Yeltsin's son-in-law, Leonid Dyachenko. Sibneft had pre-privatisation oil supply contracts with Dyachenko companies.

Abramovich's acknowledged friendship with Yeltsin's influential daughter Tatyana was seen as key to his ability to step out from the shadow of Berezovsky. He was described by Yeltin's former security chief as "the cashier" for the first family. Abramovich denies any such role saying he never met Yeltsin. No charges were brought over Dyachenko accounts.

Another concern regarding Abramovich relates to his role as a major shareholder in Russian Aluminium which he helped to create in 2000 with his partner, Oleg Deripaska. The concern relates not to Abramovich or Deripaska but to some of those from whom they acquired the aluminium smelter companies which form the core of Rusal. In particular, the self-proclaimed involvement of Mikhail Cherney, aka Chernoy/Chyorny.

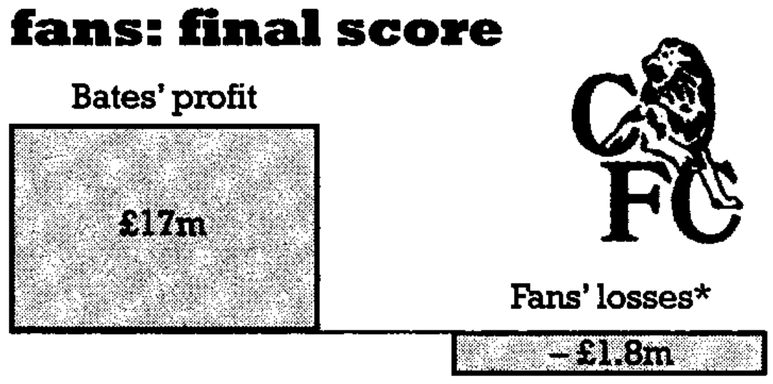
This Israel-based Russian is banned from Britain and the US because he is identified by law enforcement agencies there as well as in Russia as linked to Russian organised crime. Israel has talked of deporting Cherney. Bulgaria expelled him in 1999 for "ties to international criminal organisations". Cherney denies the allegations and has faced no criminal charges. "As soon as I try to get a visa somewhere they ask Israel about me and Israel writes back he is a murderer, racketeer and the rest," Cherney told the *Moscow Times* in 2000 while confirming his Rusal investment.

Deripaska has also been criticised over the typically Russian tactics used in the battle for control of the Kotlas pulp and paper mill from its owner, Ilim. These included the seizure and sale to Deripaska and partners of Ilim's controlling stake

Stock Horror

by 'Bruin'

Ken Bates vs. Chelsea fans: final score



*20p per 9m Chelsea Village shares sold to fans in the 1996 float

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE & RIGG

THE US/UK FREE MARKET MODEL CREATES A FAVOURABLE BUSINESS CLIMATE···
HUMAN RESOURCES
WE HAVE MORE CUSTOMERS THAN ALL THE EUROZONE COUNTRIES PUT TOGETHER···
···IN FACT WE'VE HARDLY GOT ROOM FOR THEM HERE AT MEGACORRECTIONS PLC
143.

in Kotlas following a court judgment in Siberia against Ilim after a legal action of which it claimed it was not given notice. Deripaska – despite backing from two busloads of security guards – was prevented from taking control of the plant when confronted by a bigger private security force. Ilim is suing Deripaska and Abramovich in London.

Sibneft makes much of its acceptance of western-style company rules but recent events still question whether, as Sibneft president and Chelsea director Eugene Shvidler himself wrote in 2001: "There was no adequate Russian translation for the term corporate governance."

Take for example the simple question, who owns Sibneft? Abramovich was described in the Chelsea announcement as "one of the largest" shareholders. But how much he owns is unclear. So too is whether his mentor Berezovsky is still a shareholder. Boris says he is. Sibneft says he isn't.

Then there was the little matter of the October 2001 repurchase of a 27 percent Sibneft stake – initially sold in December 2000 by Runicom for $541m – to "core shareholders", presumably including Abramovich, just ahead of a bumper dividend. How and at what price was not clear. The original purchase went unreported for months.

So too did the decision in December last year to pay an interest-free cash advance of $904m to the majority shareholders including Abramovich/ Millfield as an "advance dividend" – something denied to minority shareholders who have to wait for their dividend until later this year.

The complaint made about the "loans for shares" scam was that those who made the loans knew the Yeltsin government could not repay and then were able to rig the sale to ensure they obtained the shares in state-owned enterprises like Sibneft at well below their real value. But even under Putin privatisation Russian-style seems less than transparent or rarely obtains the best price for the state.

Sibneft acquired control of rival Slavneft at a five-minute auction last December for more than the $1.7bn minimum price but well below market estimates. Fourteen companies initially applied but all but two either dropped out or were disqualified. Among those disqualified was BP's partner, Tyumen Oil, which was then disclosed as partnering Sibneft in the winning bid. The rival bid was represented by two giggling Russian women dressed in boots and furs. Also barred from bidding was the state-owned Rosneft, which had been prepared to pay $2.5bn against Sibneft/Tyumen's winning $1.85bn. The result, they said, had been predetermined.

To the extent that Abramovich and Sibneft have answered questions they have been to repeat that everything that has been done was legal and that no investigation has ever resulted in any charge against the company or Abramovich. And all of that is true. But it still leaves much unexplained.

Not that this will worry Chelsea chairman Ken Bates, whose British Virgin islands company will receive £17.5m from Abramovich. Or the beneficial owners of the five Guernsey-administered trusts which shared another near £9m. Not at all a surprise that these investors – advised by Bates' long time adviser Patrick Murrin – also jumped at the Russian bid. But then Bates has always been able to count on their support. This was necessary as Abramovich wanted to buy control; and Bates, with the trusts plus other Bates allies, provided a whisker over the crucial 50%.

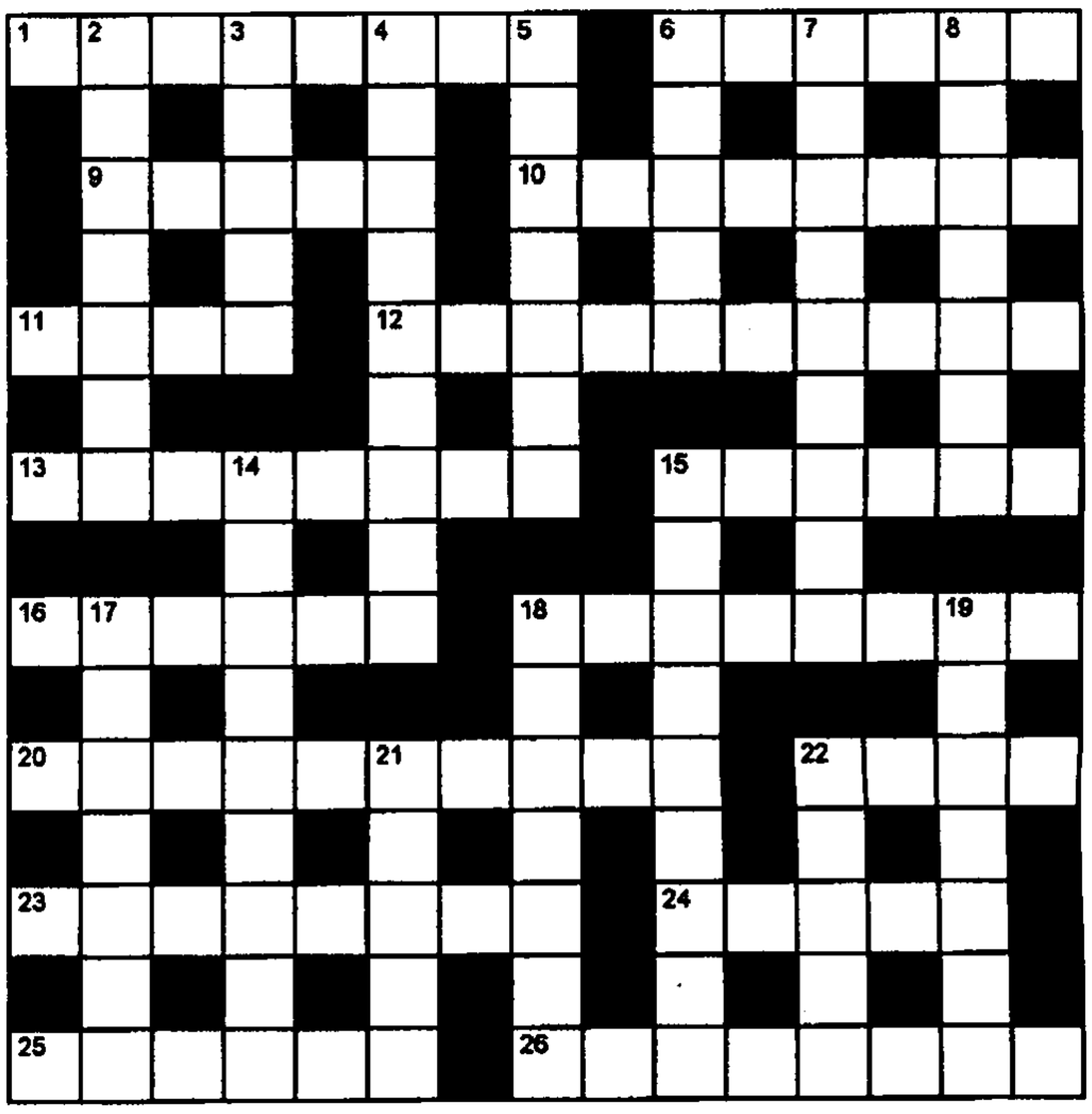
Whether the other Chelsea Village shareholders will be so happy is less certain. The shares were floated in 1996 at 55p. They were once 160p. The club minus Abramovich faced possible administration. But just how long Bates will remain as chairman is open to question. Probably just as long as Abramovich, who has a reputation for ruthlessness, and his hired hands find him useful.

"It's common knowledge that money loves quiet," Abramovich told an American interviewer two years ago. He has already learned that is the last thing you get when you buy an English soccer club.

'Slicker'

EYE CROSSWORD 239

by Cyclops



£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 18 July 2003.

Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN or via email to crossword@private-eye.co.uk

ACROSS

1 Poor soul restrained by legal document, subjected to nit-picking (8)
6 City gents pissed at having to accept sod all (6)
9 Blanket turned back by Brenda's flunky (5)
10 In other words, was asked by PM to quit seeing Dr Spin (8)
11/12 Blimey! Conservative party's featured in magazine! Editor's conclusion: "No office for Blair" (4,10)
13 Put wind up scary film freak, being decapitated (5,3)
15 Primate's interdict about "intimidating ejaculation" (6)
16 Slight repulsion of Brenda: "one's bare skin" (6)
18 Taken for a crap TV presenter after "chill out" (8)
20 Toady has to be repellent penetrating a dog (10)
22 Swine – good original name of a one-time 11/12 (4)
23 Wards off gropes, guarding left quarter of testicle (8)
24 Clot getting soused, imbibing one of eight (5)
25 Watch out for their pricks in M&S, short, long and small (6)
26 Drunk from leaked water main (8)

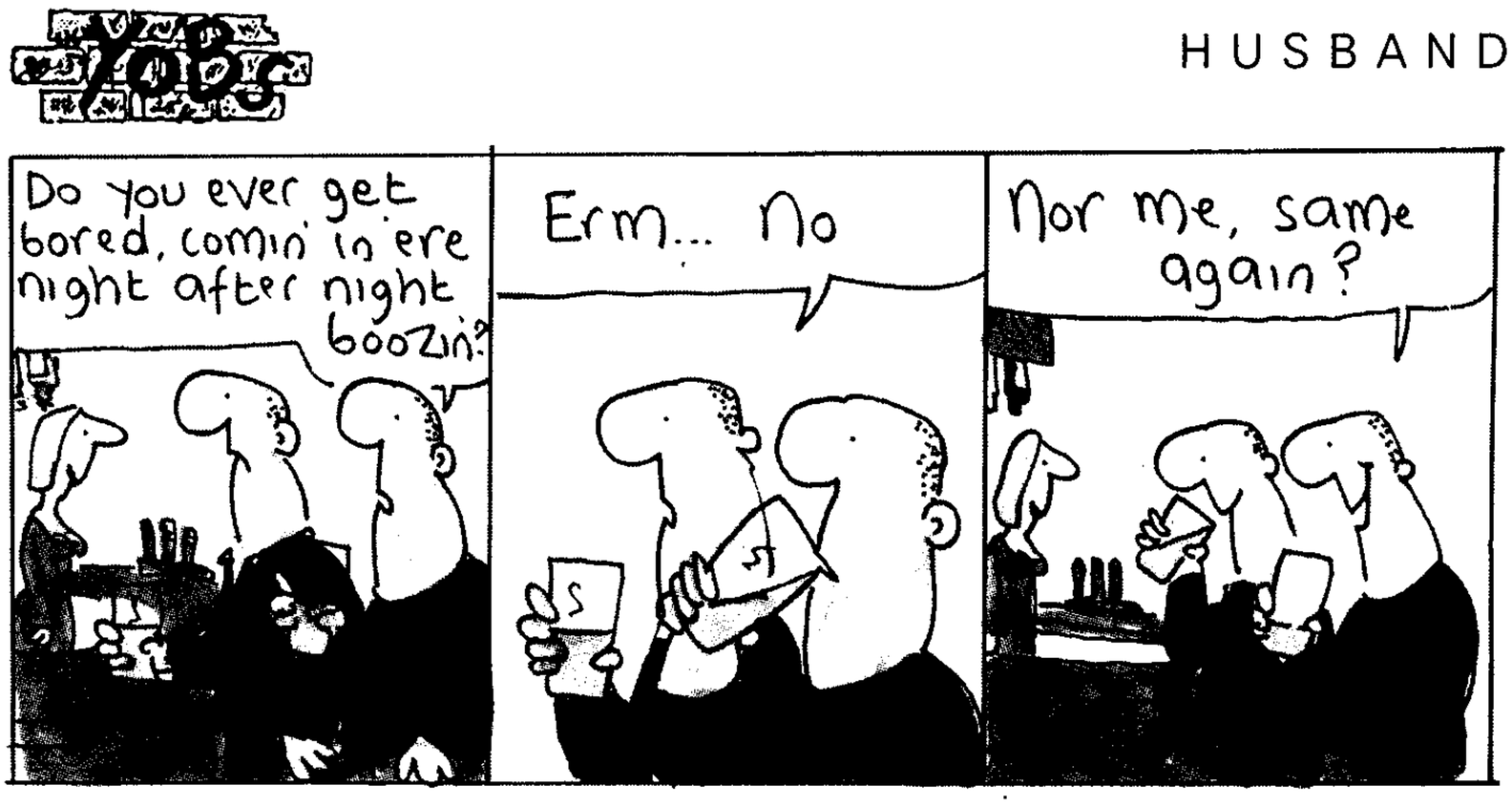
DOWN

2 Write in legal form "topless bird obscene" (7)
3 Went away with Dicky the hack (5)
4 Blow holding right back, being prevented from practising (6,3)
5 Refrain from getting stuffed by excited ram when asleep (7)
6 "Blur are sadly instrumentally challenged" starts to be the language of the PC (5)
7 Set to stick out chest (9)
8 Great artist? Get knotted, sweet! (7)
14 Give up grub? Cyclops can! (5,2,2)
15 Nuts about space venues for twisters and the like (9)
17 Say, duck – a tumble? It'll be good for your self-esteem (3,4)
18 Inclination for the stage and drink revives some old scandal? (5,2)
19 Issue raised by ex-minister Cook on telly (7)
21 Desires Stalinist actions when leader's ousted (5)
22 Knot's all that's left when director's castrated (5)

Crossword 238 winner: J. BIBBY

ACROSS: 1 Agrippa 5 Baroque 9 Mufti 10 Pubic hair 11 Apricot 12 Sweet FA 13 Double entendre 17 Lavatory humour 21 Shagged 23 Rarebit 25 Lohengrin 26 Nigel 27 Modesty 28 Suspend.

DOWN: 1 Armbands 2 Rifer 3 Priscilla 4 Amputee 5 Baby-sit 6 Recce 7 Quarter to 8 Earwax 14 Unabashed 15 Neutrinos 16 Prattled 18 Orderly 19 Y-fronts 20 Asylum 22 Gents 24 Bogie.



SPEAK ANOTHER LANGUAGE? SPEAK IT BETTER.

•FRENCH •SPANISH •Italian •GERMAN

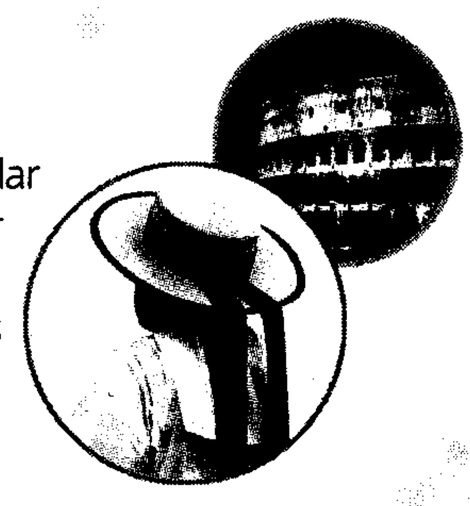
Audiomagazines for intermediate-to-advanced language learners

Now you can continue your language study month in and month out with *Champs-Elysées*, *Schau ins Land*, *Acquerello italiano*, and *Puerta del Sol*, internationally acclaimed audiomagazines unlike anything for language learners you've ever seen.

"...better than a language course." – About.com

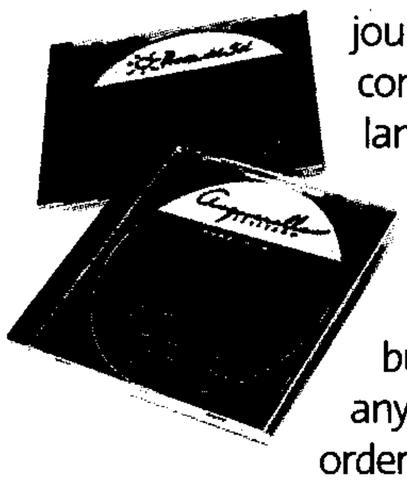
Authentic Radio-Style programmes

Each monthly (Spanish & Italian appear every 2 months) audiomagazine, hosted by popular native broadcasters, consists of an hour long radio-style programme on audiocassette or CD. An accompanying 60-70 page magazine contains a full printed transcript, a glossary averaging 600 words & expressions translated into English, plus scores of background notes on people, places, events, and grammatical issues.



On-going Language Learning in an Entertaining Cultural Context

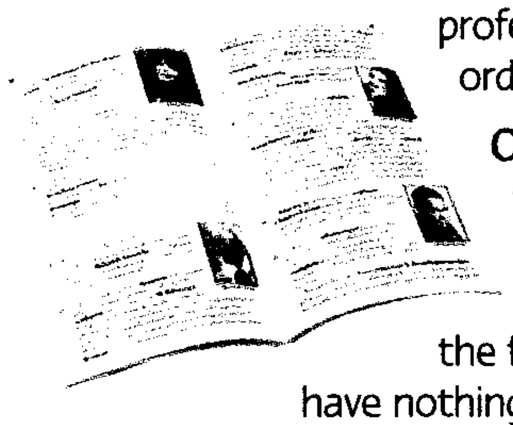
You'll hear original authentic interviews with politicians, writers, artists, sportsmen, journalists, celebrities, and segments covering current events and issues, and insights into contemporary culture and beloved traditions. By giving you an opportunity to hear the language as it's really spoken, we help you expand your vocabulary and vastly improve your ability to understand the spoken language.



The Most Flexible Way to Perfect Your Language Skills

Because each audiomagazine is portable, it's easy to integrate language study into your busy life. Work on fluency while commuting, walking the dog, exercising, cooking dinner, anytime and anywhere you want! If you need or want to make faster progress you can order the optional study supplements which are work sheets containing innovative listening exercises and grammar drills, and are available for each issue with the answers included.

Over and over again we are told there is no better product for sophisticated language learners. Why not find out for yourself what thousands of business people, teachers, diplomats, and professionals across the world are raving about. Just fill in the order form below, ring us, or order online.



Order Risk Free! Subscribe today!

DOUBLE MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE: Take 6 weeks to try your first edition. If it doesn't totally reenergize your language study, let us know and we will completely refund your money — you can even keep your first issue — so no returns hassle. Secondly, if ever in the future you decide it's not for you, we'll send you a refund for any issues not mailed. You have nothing to lose.

Champs-Elysees, Spike Island, 133 Cumberland Road, Bristol BS1 6UG

Champs-Elysées AUDIOMAGAZINES

YES, Please rush me my first audiomagazine!

Champs-Elysées (French)	☐ 5 monthly editions on tape, £55 ☐ 11 monthly editions on tape, £99	☐ On CD, £65 ☐ On CD, £121	☐ Supplement, add £15 ☐ Supplement, add £33
Schau ins Land (German)	☐ 5 monthly editions on tape, £55 ☐ 11 monthly editions on tape, £99	☐ On CD, £65 ☐ On CD, £121	☐ Supplement, add £15 ☐ Supplement, add £33
Acquerello italiano (Italian)	☐ 6 bi-monthly editions on tape, £69	☐ On CD, £81	☐ Supplement, add £18
Puerta del Sol (Spanish)	☐ 6 bi-monthly editions on tape, £69	☐ On CD, £81	☐ Supplement, add £18

(All prices include P&P within the UK and overseas)

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

Address _____

_____

☐ **Cheque enclosed** (payable to Champs-Elysées Ltd.)

Debit my VISA/Mastercard/American Express/Eurocard/Switch/Diners

Card No. _____ **Expiry Date.** ☐☐/☐☐ **Issue** ☐☐ (Switch)

Credit card orders may be faxed on 0117 929 2426 Outside the UK call (44) 117 929 2320

POST TO: CHAMPS-ELYSEES, DEPT. PE1107, FREEPOST LON 295, BRISTOL, BS1 6FA

WWW.AUDIOMAGAZINE.COM 0800 833 257

L'ORÉAL PARIS

A perfect cover story.

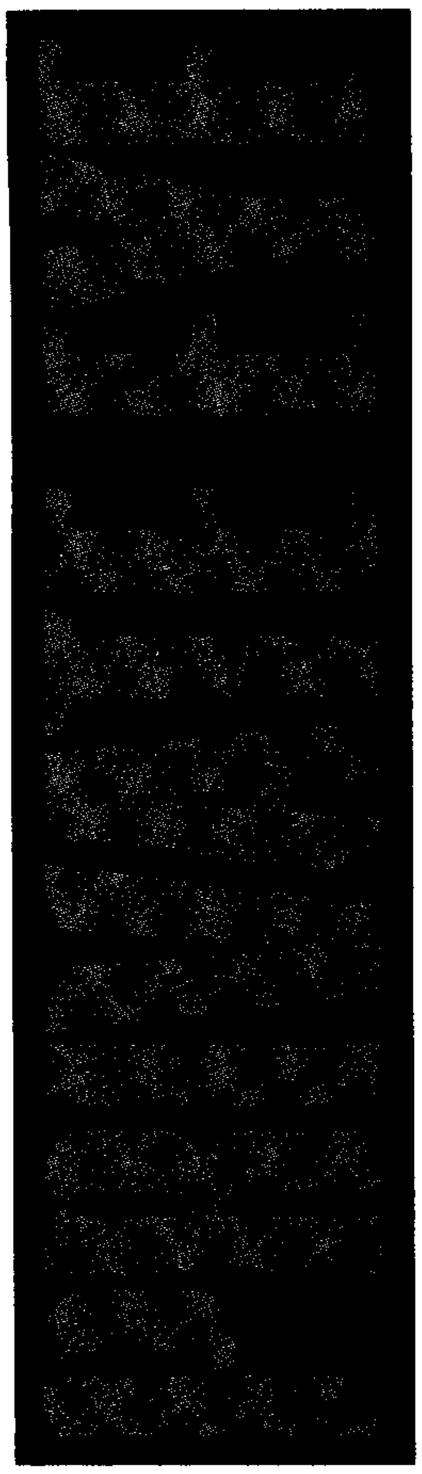
THICKENS HAIR FOR BETTER SCALP COVERAGE

combines one of hair's vital substances and a new active ingredient. It acts from the roots to fortify and thicken.

77% of men experienced a thickening effect.

www.lorealparis.com

L'ORÉAL ELVIVE FOR MEN



IT IS ONLY £19* FOR ONE YEAR!

Subscribe NOW to PRIVATE EYE and SAVE OVER 43% on the UK cover price.

PLUS Free delivery by 1st class post each fortnight.

Order today on our credit card hotline:

0870 750 1714

(Overseas +44 (0) 1795 414 871)

or online at: www.private-eye.co.uk

Alternatively complete this order form and send with your payment to:
Private Eye Subscriptions, P.O. Box 326, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8FA

I would like to subscribe to PRIVATE EYE.

Please send the magazine to:

Title Initial Surname

Address

Postcode

Your daytime telephone no:
(in case we have a query with the order)

Your email:

❑ UK* £19.00 ❑ Europe & Eire £27.00 ❑ Rest of World £35.00
Overseas subscribers can also pay by International Money Order

❑ I enclose a Sterling cheque made payable to PRIVATE EYE *or*

❑ Please charge my MasterCard / Visa / Switch (issue no:)

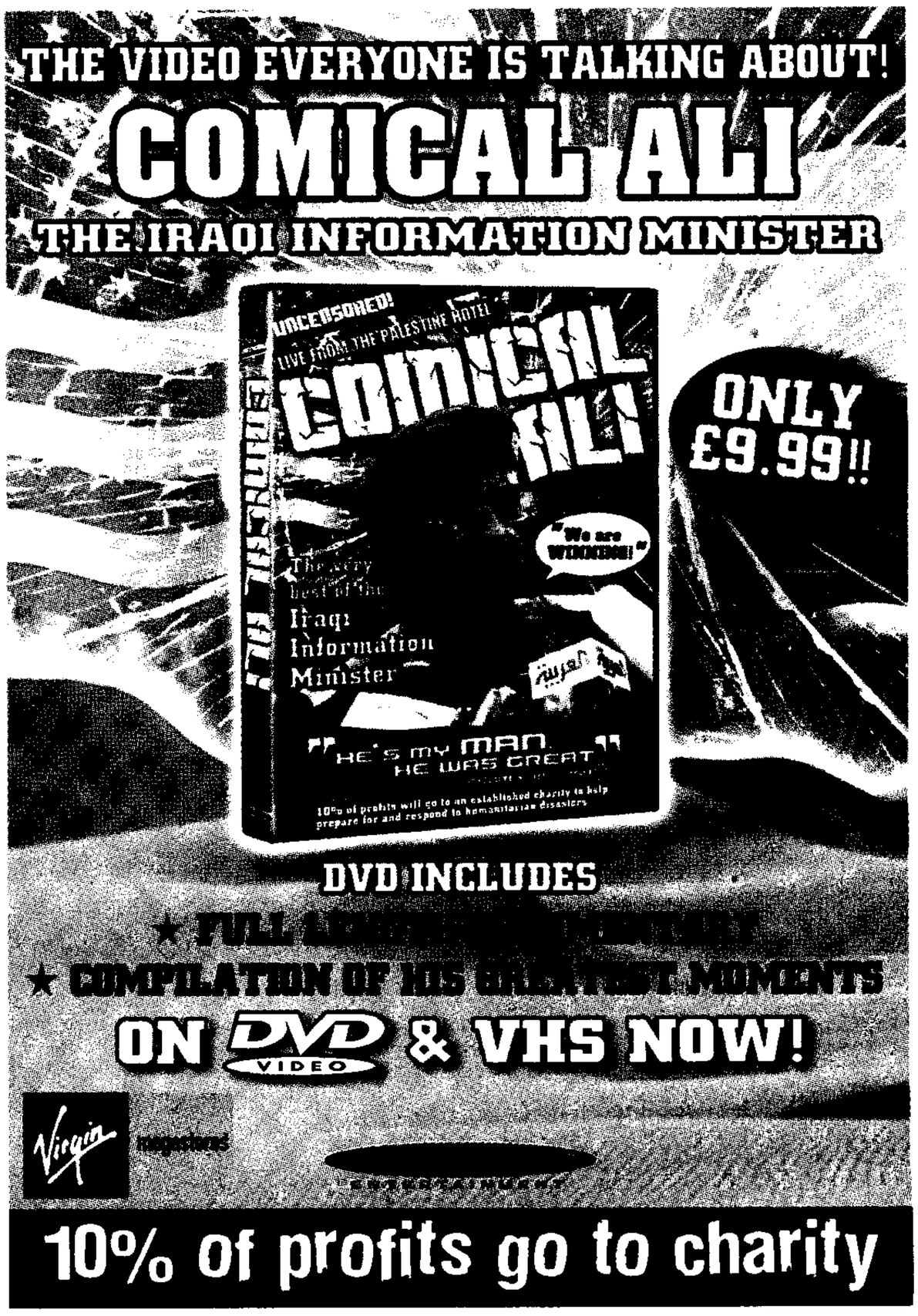
Card number:

SWITCH ONLY

Expiry date:

Signature

N1084


THE VIDEO EVERYONE IS TALKING ABOUT!
COMICAL ALI
THE IRAQI INFORMATION MINISTER
UNCENSORED!
LIVE FROM THE PALESTINE HOTEL
COMICAL ALI
"We are WINNING!"
The very best of the Iraqi Information Minister
"HE'S MY MAN HE WAS GREAT"
10% of profits will go to an established charity to help prepare for and respond to humanitarian disasters
ONLY £9.99!!
DVD INCLUDES
★ FULL
★ COMPILATION OF HIS
MOMENTS
ON DVD VIDEO & VHS NOW!
Virgin
10% of profits go to charity

NO MORE 'BUSY FOOL!'

Working all hours?
Disappointed with results?

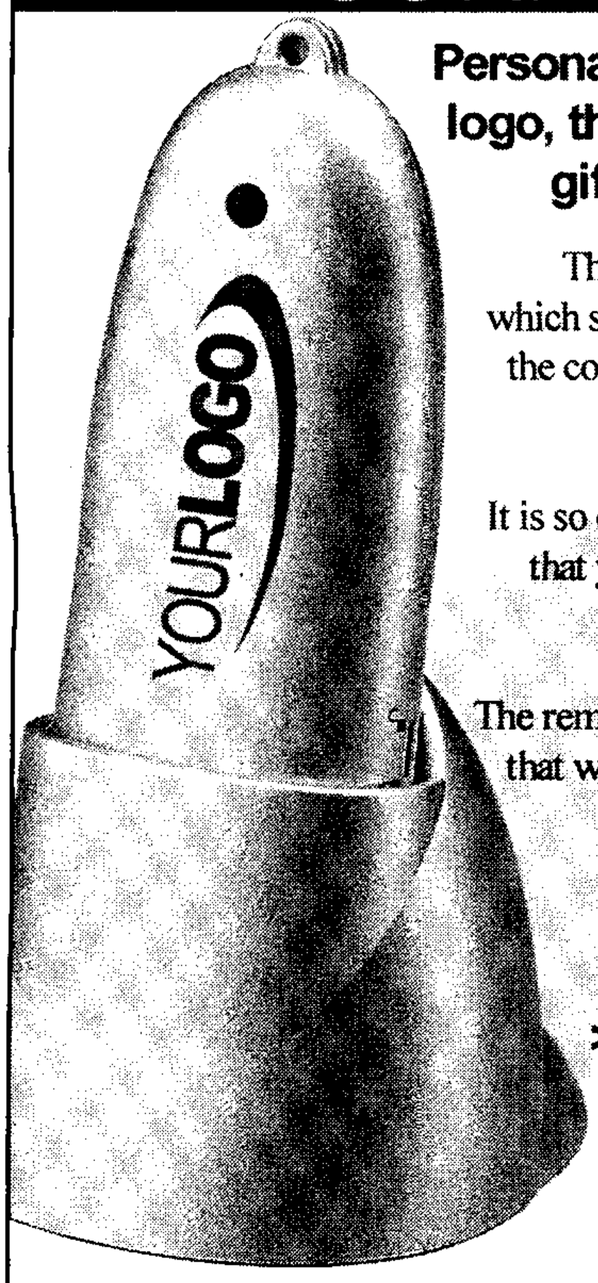
Obeng's books are an antidote to the dryness of much managerial theorising.'
Financial Times

Two New Books plus Application Workshops from Dr. Eddie Obeng

Buy Books NOW from: Amazon.co.uk
Register for workshops NOW at:
www.PentacleTheVBS.com/bookonline.htm
Tel: +44 (0) 1494 678 555
E-Mail:
No.Fool@PentacleTheVBS.com

PENTACLE

THE **ULTIMATE** CORPORATE GIFT



Personalised with your company logo, the PenDrive is the perfect gift for your clients or staff.

The PenDrive is a plug & play device which simply plugs into any USB port and the computer automatically detects it as a removable drive.

It is so compact (size of a cigarette lighter) that you can carry it with you anywhere and hardly notice its existence!

The removable PenDrive is a powerful tool that will be used daily by your clients for both business and personal use.

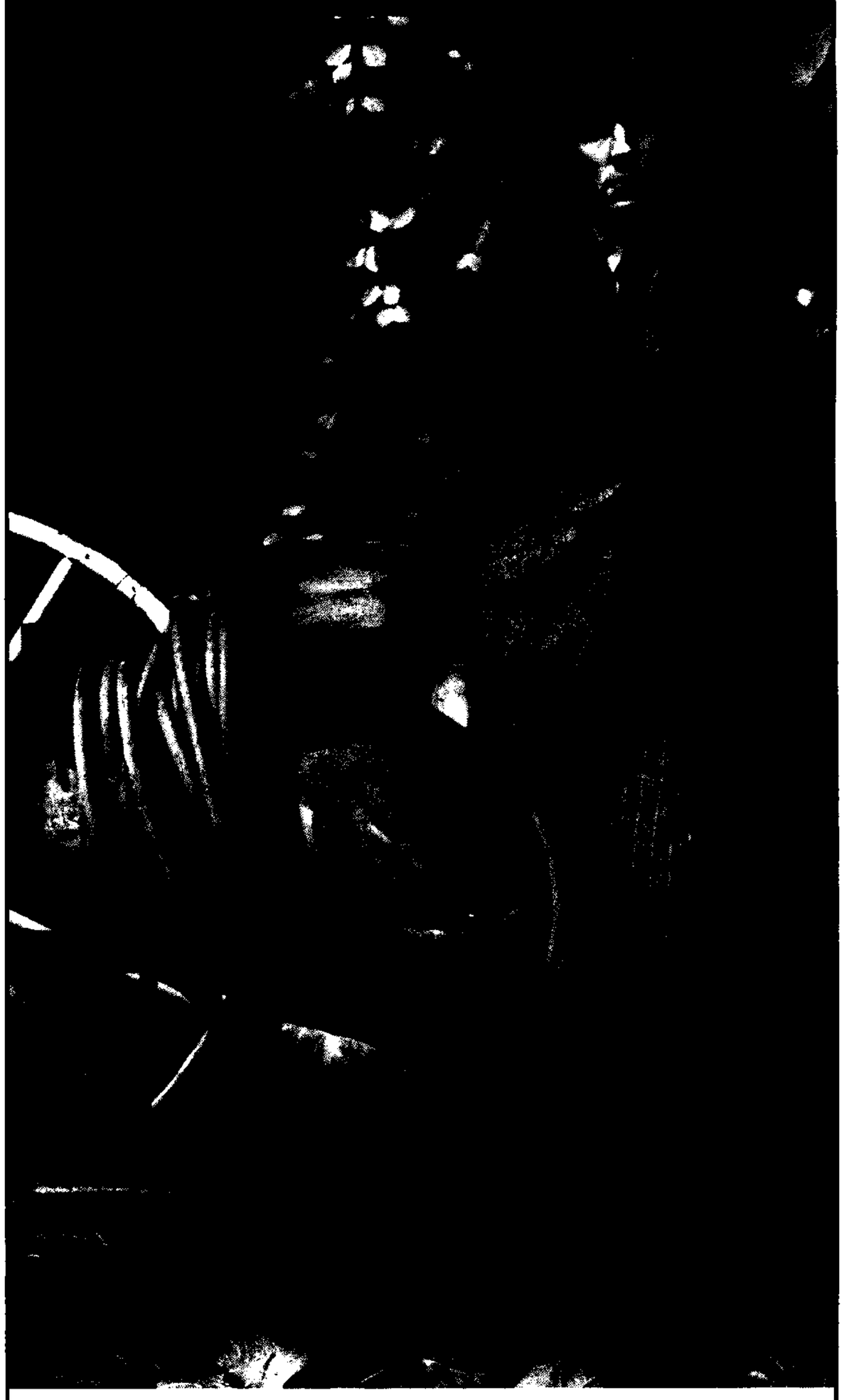
> Prices from £29 +VAT*
> Quantities from as low as 20 units undertaken

** 64MB USB 2.0 version with Docking Station*

Contents: PenDrive (Silver), Presentation Box, Docking Station, Neck Strap, USB Extension Lead, CD

Jade tec
sales 0113 281 7788
fax 0870 138 4213
sales@jadetec.co.uk
www.jadetec.co.uk
Prices exclude VAT and carriage. Prices are subject to change without notice E&OE

BUY IT NOW IN PAPERBACK



'The funniest man who ever drew breath'
STEPHEN FRY

Tragically I was an Only Twin

The Complete
PETER COOK

'Brilliantly stupid...
Cook's voice echoes off the page'
CRAIG BROWN, *MAIL ON SUNDAY*

arrow books
A division of The Random House Group Ltd.
www.randomhouse.co.uk

He introduced her to his bit on the side...

The finest Mustards, Chutneys and Relishes, from Tracklements.

For details of your nearest stockist visit our website or call our freephone number: 0800 731 3229
www.tracklements.co.uk
The Dairy Farm, Sherston, Wiltshire, SN16 0NX

Investigative Journalism Summer School

For the first time in the UK!

Intensive three day course for Journalists and Professional Researchers in all media
in association with Investigative Reporters and Editors of St.Louis, Missouri
July 18-20 2003
University of Westminster, Marylebone Road, London NW1

Subjects

COMPUTER ASSISTED REPORTING,
HOW TO MOUNT QUICK INVESTIGATIONS,
INVESTIGATIONS AND THE LAW,
BUSINESS INVESTIGATIONS,
WAR REPORTING,
COVERT FILMING AND RECORDING,
REPORTING THE POLICE AND ORGANISED CRIME,
INVESTIGATING INTELLIGENCE AND TERRORISM,
REPORTING SPORT AS A JOURNALIST NOT AS A FAN,
HOW TO USE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTS,
WORKING ABROAD,
AVOIDING THE SPIN DOCTORS

Speakers and Workshops led by

BRYAN APPLEYARD
DUNCAN CAMPBELL
PAUL FOOT
ANDREW JENNINGS
PHILIP KNIGHTLEY
PAUL LASHMAR
JACK LAURENCE
DAVID LEIGH
ROBIN RAMSAY
MARTIN SHORT
MARTIN TOMKINSON
BRANT HOUSTON AND STAFF OF IRE
+ leading media lawyers and journalists from the U.S, Norway, Sweden, France and Germany

For the latest information about the school, including discounts and to register, e-mail **RegistrationInfo@InvestigativeReporting.org.uk** or visit **www.investigativeReporting.org.uk**

lsf
Lorana Sullivan UK Foundation

Director Gavin MacFadyen
0207 834 1905

Guest speaker Seymour Hersh
Pulitzer Prize winning writer on the War in Iraq, Mai Lai, The CIA, Henry Kissinger, The Kennedys, and the Israeli Bomb, for the New Yorker and The New York Times

A unique wedding or anniversary gift...

LUXURY SILK FILLED DUVETS

(or you could always treat yourself!)

0845 4502248 MANDARINA TEXTILES **www.mandarina.co.uk**

Conforms to British Standard BS5335, Part 1 — Naturally Hypoallergenic

★ STOCKBROKERS • DOCTORS • ADVERTISING • ACCOUNTANTS • ARCHITECTS ★
MARKETING • DESIGNERS
EDUCATIONALISTS • WRITERS

drawing down *the* moon

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION CONSULTANTS - THE FIRST AND FINEST

"a partner for life...that's where Drawing Down the Moon comes in"
FINANCIAL TIMES

020-7937 6263
www.drawingdownthemoon.co.uk
Head Office: Adam & Eve Mews, Kensington. *City Office:* Cannon Street
24 hours. Member ABIA Est. 1984

★ MEDIA COMPANY DIRECTORS • LAWYERS • PR • BANKERS • SCIENTISTS ★

The
Blue Angel Club

welcomes you and your friends for a really unforgettable evening. Drink, or dine and dance in luxurious surroundings and be served or entertained by our Angels.
Open Monday to Friday from 6.30pm until late
Membership not required.
17 Little Portland Street, London W1N 5DE Tel: 020 7636 2178

enJOY Retro Jukeboxes

A serious jukebox, beautifully finished with authentic 'Wurlitzer' style neon tube lighting, real wood veneers and spinning disc display for that authentic 60's look and feel. The unit incorporates an FM Stereo with 15 presets and a 10 CD module changer all of which can be remotely controlled.

£799

Buy now at www.enjoy.co.uk or call 0870 242 1808

boys toys | office stuff | adult fun | gifts

15 to 1

COME AND HAVE A GO

WE KNOW YOU'RE SMART ENOUGH!

We need 1,000 contestants for our daily Channel Four quiz show. We are auditioning in your area soon for our Autumn series Ring us on 020 7691 6305 or e-mail us at fifteentoone@thamestv.co.uk for an application form.

DO YOU *REALLY* KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON?

SUSPECT SOMETHING'S GOING ON? FIND OUT - WITHOUT BEING FOUND OUT!

Disloyalty can be dangerous. It's often damaging and invariably hurtful. Commercially, it's usually expensive. You may not like the idea of using 'bugging' equipment but it can heighten your awareness and help you anticipate. You'll be amazed how we conceal microphones and tiny cameras in the most innocent and ordinary everyday objects.

LORRAINE ELECTRONICS SURVEILLANCE
716 Lea Bridge Road, London E10 6AW.
Fax: 020 8558 1338
Central London Showroom:
59 South Audley Street, W1K 2QN
Web Site: www.lorraine.co.uk
TEL: 020 8558 4226

Carbon monoxide kills!

Gasco alarms save lives

GASCO GAS SERVICES

Protect your family, customers and pets *now* with the SF350 superior carbon monoxide alarm.

Now only £34.99

Why choose the SF350?
5 year guarantee
No maintenance
No batteries to change
Continuous testing
Portable for holidays

Call now and have your SF350 within days.
Tel: 01698 37 36 38
Or send cheques to: SF 350 Offer
96 Grange Avenue, Wishaw ML2 0AH
Cheques made payable to gasco gas services.
DELTA MasterCard JCB VISA
All major credit cards accepted.

Ci Looking for somewhere to advertise?
communications team
T: 020 7923 5414

...and suppers too!

Onlylunch

ONLY LUNCH

the professional introduction service

HOW PEOPLE LIKE YOU
MEET PEOPLE LIKE YOU
0800 908900
www.onlylunch.co.uk

www.ivorytowers.net

The new intelligent online **friendship and matchmaking site**, for alumni, postgraduates and students of all eras.

It's a new way of doing an old thing.

Free Trial Period

menu

Cartoon Gallery

biogs
books
gallery
exhibitions

A selection of cartoons, illustrations and animated cels can be found on the **Cartoon Gallery Website**, from **Chris Riddell** to **Steve Bell, Alex** to **Appleby, Honeysett** to **Husband** and **McLachlan** to **Matt.**

The site also has extensive biographies, including **Ronald Searle** and **Kipper Williams** and the **Search by Subject** pages contain **12** categories from **Art** to **Therapy,** showing over **120** original cartoons.

All cartoons and books are dispatched within three working days via our mail order department, so..... for the speculative and gift buyer alike, please visit:

www.cartoongallery.co.uk

The Cartoon Gallery 39 Great Russell St. London WC1B 3PH
tel: 020-7636-1011 fax: 020-7436-5053 e mail: cartoongallery@easynet.co.uk

BIRTHDAY NEWSPAPERS

Births, Birthdays, Weddings, Christenings, Anniversaries, Retirements. Papers from archives 1642-2003. Sundays from 1915. Quality presentations. Same day dispatch.

REMEMBER WHEN
445 Brighton Road,
Croydon, Surrey CR2 6EU
www.remember-when.co.uk

020 8763 6363
or call FREE 0500 520 000

GOING OVERSEAS ?!
Cheapest crossings with perfect accommodation

0800-1691772
info@britishferry.com

www.britishferry.com

Discounted Worldwide Business Class Flights

Great savings on long haul business flights:

Plus special business fares to Australia from £3520.

Many other destinations.

Small print advised when booking but nothing too onerous.

To	London Direct	Our Fare Indirect	You Save
Atlanta	£4274	£1870	£2404!
Boston	£3956	£1650	£2306!
LAX	£6049	£2310	£3739!
Mauritius	£4387	£1850	£2537!

T:01753 889 567
gxx@advantagetravel.co.uk

IATA 91211411 ABTA 28684

The Open University

Two-year diplomas

Career and personal development for busy people

You can get a qualification from The Open University in just two years without the need to give up work or family commitments.

Choose from 32 diplomas in such areas as: *Computing, Arts, Economics, Environment, Geography, Health and Social Welfare, Information Technology, Management, Mathematics, Modern Languages, Music, Psychology, Science, Social Sciences.*

The Open University is the acknowledged expert in helping people study in their own time. We'll give you the support of a tutor for individual help and advice - a specialist in the subject you're studying. Many courses offer group tutorials and some have residential schools where you can meet other students. And we'll supply you with learning materials of the highest standard. The Open University leads the world in its use of new technology for learning. It's real value for money *and you can pay by instalments.*

Did you know?

- **70% of OU undergraduate students remain in full-time employment throughout their studies**
- **Over 30,000 employers have sponsored their staff on OU courses**
- **150,000 OU students are online from home**
- **Courses can be studied outside the UK**

†Accredited by The Association of MBAs.

Call the OU 24 hr Hotline quoting ref UGDACN **0870 9000 301**

Advisers available 8.30 - 5.00pm

www.open.ac.uk/brochure/

To: The Open University, PO Box 625, Milton Keynes MK7 6YG
Please send me the following prospectus(es):
☐ Undergraduate Courses and Qualifications (CDD04)
☐ Higher Degrees (HD04) **Complete in BLOCK CAPITALS**

Title Initials Surname

Address

Postcode Date of Birth / /

Tel (Day/Evening)

Email Code: UGDACN

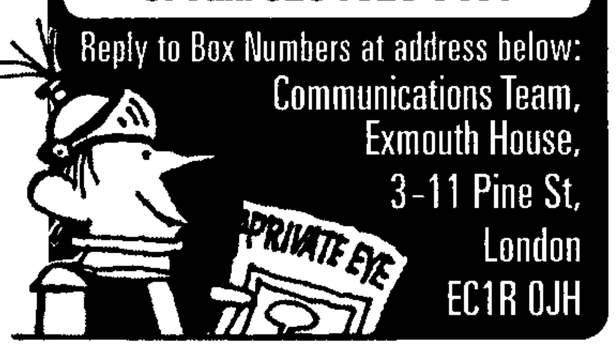
CLASSIFIED 020 7837 4566

£2.50 per word (£25 min charge)
Includes entry on PE Website
www.private-eye.co.uk
Border £12 Box Number £12
All charges VAT inclusive

Deadline for next issue: July 16th

You can email your ad to:
private-eye@communicationsteam.com
or Fax: 020 7923 5401

Reply to Box Numbers at address below:
Communications Team,
Exmouth House,
3-11 Pine St,
London
EC1R 0JH



EYE BUY

EYES 1792-last week. Few missing. 020 8642 8506 offers. Good condition.

EYE CHARTER

ADVENTURES WITH ALICE – traditional Thames Sailing Barge near Tower Bridge www.lookingglass charters.com

EYE COLLECT

PLEASURE AND INVESTMENT. Autographs and memorabilia. Call Europe's largest dealer – Freephone 0800 731 0852 or www.frasersautographs.com

EYE CARE

ERECTION CORRECTION TABLETS, cheapest on earth. www.generic-viagras.com

ERECTION PROBLEMS? solved. Delivered tomorrow – effective 30 minutes. lowest prices. Telephone 01299 250464.

ERECTION PERFECTION with Viagra from EUROMED. Also Testosterone creams for men/women – enhances sexual ability/libido. 0701 071 8424.

VIAGRA ALTERNATIVE. Famous Blue Pill available without prescription, as featured in the national press. Only £29.99 for 8 tablets (plus postage). Credit card order line 0871 220 3801.

HAS THE PRICE OF DENTAL TREATMENT got you feeling down in the mouth? There is an alternative my toothless friends. For details contact: author@poisonpencil.com

CHILDHOOD HEMIPLEGIA, hemiparesis, hemiplegic cerebral palsy. For information and advice visit www.hemihelp.org.uk

EYE DETECT

JAMES BLACK (Privateeye). No1 , tracing, torts, lots-more. Jamexblack@yahoo.co.uk. Tel 0121 247 2600

LINK INVESTIGATIONS – Private And Commercial Investigators Tracing, Surveillance, Staff Vetting, Matrimonial, Debugging, Genealogy, House checks, DNA checks etc. Tel: 01306 880707 Fax: 01306 888077 E-mail: info@linkinvestigations.co.uk Web Site: www.linkinvestigations.co.uk

EYE DINE

DUCK CONFIT & FOIE GRAS from S.W. France at everyday prices. Confit Direct 01938 553478 – www.confitdirect.co.uk

EYE DRINK

BEER, BEER, BEER. Fancy something different? The worlds bst on-line store for imported beers. Delivered to your door within 7 days. Booze-uk.com or call 0870 011 9226

VINTAGE GAILLAC RED WINE 1993-99. Devigne Wines 01938 553478 – www.devignewines.co.uk

EYE DRIVE

VOTED BY WHICH MAGAZINE best car gadget. www.curryhook.co.uk

EYE EARN

WORK FROM HOME and make money on the Net. www.pop-online.co.uk

HAD ENOUGH? Work from home. www.happier-mondays.com

www.iwantmorethanthis.com – high income from home. 0151 728 9435.

EYE ESCAPE

MAJORCAN PROPERTIES, from cheap holiday apartments to fantasy homes of unrivalled luxury. Get more Euros for your pound whilst you can.Tel: 00 34 660 980 556 www.cjbestard.com

BEACH HOLIDAYS BORING? Chamonix-Mont-Blanc climbing courses. www.icicle-mountaineering.ltd.uk, 07980 310 253.

WHITE WATER RAFTING, multi activity breaks and real ale! www.activitypubs.co.uk

TREK IN AMERICA and have an adventure – www.suntrek.com tel: 0845 330 3730

ORKNEY — small seaside cottage close shops on cliff path, high/low season. One-bedroom. Tel: 01294 467642.

COUNTRY HOUSE STYLE in the heart of the breathtaking Malvern Hills. Restaurant of The Year Award – Birmingham Post & Evening Mail Group 3 Stars, 2 Food Rosettes, Michelin, Egon Ronay, A.A. Courtesy & Care Award One of England's Best Loved Hotels – Indulge yourself, book a gourmet break now! from £75.00pppn. 2+nts. Colwall Park, Hotel, Bar & Restaurant, Colwall, Malvern, Worcs.WR13 6QG Tel: 01684 540000 Fax: 01684 540847Web: www.colwall.com

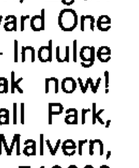
GREECE – CYCLADES ISLANDS. Mykonos (direct flights), Paros, Naxos, Laos, Santorini – plus a dozen quiet ones. SIMPLY SPECIAL. Simply Simon Holidays. ATOL 2578, 020 7373 1933.

WILDWIND SEX, sun, sea, sand, surf, sailing OK no surf! The BEST watersports holidays. ATOL 2751. RYA level 5. Brochure Tel 01920 484516 www.wildwind.co.uk

THE BEST VILLA IN FLORIDA – Allegedly. Beautiful large villa 10 mins from Disney, 20 mins from airport, sleeps 10, own private pool, overlooking lake. From £ 500-00 pw. 0161 775 7676 or www.sunridgevilla.co.uk

SEEKING AN EXISTENCE which makes (more) sense, away from all hype, artificiality and bullsh**t. www.vergel-alpujarra.com

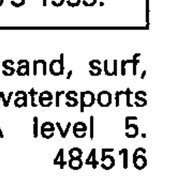
EYE FINANCE



MOST INVESTMENT managers support fat cat pay deals. To find ones that don't, contact robin@towersoftaunton.co.uk 01823 423418 FSA regulated.

PROPERTY INVESTMENT Opportunity, North West. Single parent selling 2/3rd share in family home valued @ £320k. For more information 0151 724 1042, sxsimpson@hotmail.com

EYE GARDEN



SOLAR POWERED – garden lights, water features, battery rechargers etc. www.britisheco.com

AWARD-WINNING travel firm bucking industry trend with fast growth. On verge of serious success but needs angel to help cash flow. Founders have mortgaged houses/kids/pets: businessopportunity2003@hotmail.com

INVESTMENT ANGEL and business mentor for exciting new business idea. evewestbrook@hotmail.com

GUARANTEED SPANISH BANK accounts – no credit checks, no visits. With cheque book and credit cards. 01299 250464.

EYE GO OUT

13THC MANOR Houseparties/reunions. Sleeps 24. Tennis/Swimming. Services as required. Idyllic setting Somerset/Devon border. Tel 0870 752 4501. www.gerbestonemanor.com

EYE FLY

SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT – Private Air Charter. Personal, professional, competitive service. Compare us to the others! +44 117 9297739 – www.Europe-air.com

FLIGHT OPTIONS – telephone booking service. Tel: 01432 851062, Fax: 01432 850722, HENRY ROGERS, ATOL 3793.

EYE HELP

BANKRUPTCY ASSOCIATION: Independent advice on debt problems. Website: www.theba.org.uk Telephone: 01524 64305

ANTIQUES RESTORED by people who know how – www.lawrencebrass.com

JAMES moves your possessions. Household / office. Boxes / storage available. 020 8208 1497.

LET DOWN by Sue, Grabbit and Runne? Don't let them get away with it. Professional negligence claims on a no win no fee basis. Freephone 08000523620 or visit www.proneg.co.uk

www.cheaper-loan.co.uk/eye Are you paying too much on loans, credit cards & mortgages?

SPEECHWRITING BY BRITAIN'S LEADING PROFESSIONAL. Laughter fully guaranteed! Corporate, Social, Political. Strictly confidential. Visa/Mastercard. Call MITCH MURRAY – 01624 622660.

ACCOMMODATION ADDRESS private, discreet, confidential mail/message-holding service, REGENT STREET. Established 1979. 020 7580 4242. E-mail: enquiry@hold-everything.com – www.hold-everything.com

EYE RAIL – TRAIN INFORMATION (24hrs). UK timetables, fares, delays, cancellations. JOURNEYCALL 09065 500 000. The Stables, Fettercairn, Aberdeenshire AB30 1UE. Calls £1/min

FACELIFT YOUR KITCHEN WITH GRANITE. 6 linear metres of modular granite worktop from only £499. No need for templating. Telephone: 07747 112188, Fax 01329 832704 or e-mail: enquiries@q-marketing.org

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY CLAIMS. Lost out due to bad advice? Why don't you sue your adviser? Contact GORVINS SOLICITORS and we'll do it for you. FREEPHONE 0800 214531 or E-mail enquiries@gorvins.com

SORT IT! Obsessive-compulsive organises files, archives, libraries. Business or personal, computer or paper. Free quote. 07771 562863 – sorted@meister.com

EYE HOME

COTTAGES, FARMHOUSES, Land, in the Filabres mountains, Almeria, Spain. www.spanishfarmhouses.com or call 0191 267 8057.

EYE HEAR

JUKEBOX PARTY HIRE. CDs and/or 7" vinyl. Including ROCKOLA BUBBLER. £140+ delivered. 020 8318 2852.

EYE JOIN

END THE ROYAL FARCE! It's time to elect our next head of state – www.republic.org.uk – REPUBLIC (P) PO Box 34851, London W8 5YA.

EYE LEARN

YOU CAN DO IT! Learn to dowse with video £9.50 and/or book £3.50 both p&p free. Cheques P.O's to Watnay Publishing, PO Box 6350 Matlock Berbys, DE4 3ZS.

LEARN HYPNOSIS, gain supreme confidence, financial wealth, free prospectus. 0121 624 2134

EYE LET

ANDALUCIAN unspoilt mountain village, sleeps 4, £170+ week, (01761) 241080, www.arrabal.co.uk.

EYE LOVE

LITERATE PROFESSIONAL, 40y, WLTM arty, slim, curvy woman, 25-35y. Ldn/Mids/Nth. E-mail: cah0831 @yahoo.co.uk

NO NO NO NO NO. But I will let you. Male seeks female. 07956 997325.

TRAINEE LAWYER, F, 28, quiet but intelligent, fan of ER, WLTM unattached London-based doctor (I'm healthy!). E-mail: medicalattention required@hotmail.com

GENEROUS LONDON BASED GUY seeks slim, attractive vivacious mistress (not the strict sort). Age preferred 20 to 30, for wining, dining and shopping if you have to!! Hopefully an arrangement to suit us both. I'm not too bad looking, 6ft slim, fit, well dressed modest! etc etc – mc30@totalise.co.uk or Box 0983.

CITY PROFESSIONAL 50 slim 6'2" non smoking. Based London West End interests: artistic, cinema and restaurants. WLTM 30-55 years woman, similar interests for friendship wining and dining. Box 1282

FANCIABLE FEMALE, 36, black with favourable attributes easy on the eye, love of dogs, travel, motorbikes and the countryside with affectionate disposition, seeks lifetime partner (marriage) who is very tall (6ft and over) well balanced with no previous marriages or children. 30-45, who is spontaneous, unconventional, generous in personality with an implausible combination of wit, intellect and charm, to share funny and profound moments. No ginger or bald men – mariehartehа@hotmail.com or Box 2683.

M 46 SEEKS INTIMACY of mind and body with F 35-45. Me fun, single, 5'8', NS. You intelligent, gentle and ready for long term commitment. B'ham. sjc.sat@o2.co.uk

UNATTACHED WOMAN sought by warm, sensitive, articulate male, open marriage, retired, London/S.E. for enduring relationship. Enjoys arts, conversation, wining /dining. Box 0384

LAST TANGO IN BURGANDY. Tall, attractive widow, 50's, residing France, seeks hod carrier with PhD to share wine, laughter, satellite footie. Box 0684

MATURE, SOPHISTICATED, confident lady desired by tall, caring, energetic 50 male. Box 0784

EDUCATED, ROMANTIC, domesticated, decent looking 41 year old chap living in wild West Wales, WLTM cutured, pretty woman 28-38ish to share great scenery, intellectual stimulation, and passion. Box 0184

SHORT FAT CHARMLESS ugly liar (M, 47) seeks perceptive attached fanciable lady (40-50?) For mutual enjoyment of art gardens food wine and each other. Box 0884

SINGLE ATTRACTIVE female young 42, loves walking, nights in and out, G.S.O.H. etc. Seeks tall male for fun and friendship. Box 1084

DELICIOUSLY WICKED 40'S man, great fun, successful, kind, generous, educated and beautifully well built. Seeks seriously naughty but nice girl. Photo appreciated. Box 0984

M, 27, SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, recently left affectionate but unsensual relationship, seeks seductive adventuress, 20-40, for re-education in arts of love. reeducation@blueyonder.co.uk

ATTRACTIVE MALE 42 attached seeks female for passionate daytime affair, discretion assured. Yorks. carlsmith469@hotmail.com

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, intelligent lady, 40+, liberated but not promiscuous or bitchy, wants a gentleman in London. Must be non-smoker, fit 40-60, able to enjoy life and prepared to sponsor. Box 1184.

SLIM SEXY MALE late 30s seeks slim active girl 18 - 40 for evenings out and sexy nights in. Ldn/SE/Mids. mizuno699@hotmail.com

DISTINGUISHED LOOKING, kind, generous male seeks female company please reply. Box 1284

MARY took a chance. Box 1784

CLASSIC 1955 DORSET MODEL, robust chassie (size 22), sparky, responsive and in good condition for age, seeks sensitive careful driver. Would suit man of means and style who could cherish and polish on an on-going basis. Box 1384.

MASTERFUL, handsome male, 41, seeks under 30 female for fun and mutual pleasure. London/South East. summertime@easy.com

BI MALE organising international Bi private parties. Po Box 45510, London NW1 8WT.

EYE MOVES

FURNITURE LORRY returning to Ireland weekly. Space available. Ph 02890 838111. Anytime.

MOVING STUFF. Transit couriers and light removals professional, insured. 020 7622 0511.

EYE NEED

ANY DONATIONS?... Gratefully accepted! Please pay to: Lloyds Sc: 309725, Acc: 01321285 / HSBC Sc: 40-40-01, Acc: 61723782 / Barclays Sc: 207409, 40249300. I thank you all kindly.

DESPERATE CARER: cannot work as partner terminally ill. All savings gone, losing home. Breaking point. Please help. Thank you. L-TSB 87-34-12 06019886

EXTREMELY MUSICAL young pianist (M. 9yr) fees overwhelming ordinary parents. Please help HSBC 40-34-39, 113314157.

FLEDGLING PILOT requests funds to complete training. Blue Skies! RBS 16-15-19 10106749

EX-STUDENT. £15,000 DEBT. (No degree.) Trying hard. Please help. NatWest 51-70-32 40324710. Cheques to: Box 1884. Many thanks.

ANGELS? £4000 needed to clear debts and complete novel without distractions. Askmemmore@fsmail.net

CASH STRAPPED NHS NURSE would love to receive some restbite from the situation: First Direct: account number: 60845558 sort code: 40-47-73.

GRADUATE ON AGEISM scrap heap. Wife and four children. Need £25,00 to start business. Please help. Barclays SC: 20-07-82. Account 30565121

EXPERIENCED FEMALE Director requires funding to finish Russian prostitution documentary. Profits AIDS charity. www.chloemercier.com/aids NatWest 60-02-08 78731747.

COMEDY SKETCH WRITERS desperate to fund TV Pilot Episode. Midland 40-34-26 41154826.

TALENTED, HARD WORKING lady complementary therapist needs £3000. Pays back with treatments. e-mail:bodysoulclinic@hotmail.com

MICRO-BUDGET FEATURE film shooting immediately. Romantic Comedy, serious undertow. Young, established writer. Needs urgent additional finance. Big names attached. Details 07789 854 671.

"FINISHING FUNDS for financially-enfeebled/fiendishly fecund filmaker's first foray. Fanks" 77-91-10. 68700668.

DOCUMENTARY FILM waiting to be made requires finance. Please help me to pay wages of crew needed. Thank you. Nationwide 24487583. 07-01-16.

ANY UNWANTED MONEY and /or spare cash disposed of. 72-60-06/08411388

SPONSOR SOUGHT. Theatre actor. Imprisoned by student debt. Meet for talk? manonatrack@yahoo.co.uk 11-91-00 00669724

SAVE THE WORLD! Writer needs dosh to stop him becoming the new Jeffrey Archer. Barclays 20-42-73 00182095.

PUBLISHER/BACKER needed for new adult comic sensation. Like VIZ only funny. 0121 603 7317

SEEKING FUNDING to re-commence medical studies. Halifax Sc: 11-13-28, Acc: 00151486.

HELP PLEASE bail me out. The waters of debt are rising fast. All donations gratefully received. Natwest 52-41-42 59338547. Thanks.

PAYING OFF DEBT to volunteer for global project. Will take years. Need handled by xmas. All help appreciated. £50k or fractions thereof. LTSB 30-11-75 07601303 cambridgestewart@hotmail.com mobile: 07791782894

EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC label needs £5000. Thanks. Box 1484.

NEEDED 2 LAPTOPS in working order (Ex-company?) for language school in Ukraine for september. Email priscr@aol.com

SINGLE DAD with teenage son, home about to be repossessed, needs £25K to clear debts and release salary. Desperate, many thanks. RBS 16-34-22. 11141377

DESPERATE MUM and two kids need to escape violent abusive husband by dissappearing abroad. Terrified. Alone. Penniless. Can readers spare £5 to help us. Genuine plea for help. Nationwide sc 07-00-30. Acc No 56275057. Box 1584.

WIDE-EYED ORIENTAL intellectual eternally grateful for financial assistance towards her philosophy PhD. Happy to meet, drink, discuss and persuade. philosophyphd@hotmail.com. 400619/11319477.

EYE NOVELTIES

RUSSIAN WATCHES catalogue available. Tel (0115) 9827741. www.russianwatches.co.uk

GIFTS FOR THE REDHEAD IN YOUR LIFE – www.redandproud.com – Tel: 01844 274635.

"WHAT A BRILLIANT SITE!" Shop for fun @ www.gizmoandwidget.com

"MY GIRLFRIEND LOVES THAT SEMEN MUG - everyone she works with is repulsed by it." 020 8527 2513 - www.poisonmugs.co.uk

TAKING THE PITH? Sexy, sassy, sensationally stylish! The Sunhat for this season! www.kouloura.com/pith/

PERSONALISED CHAMPAGNE your unique message printed on the label delivered NEXTDAY nationwide £35 0800 583 8000 – www.nextdaychampagne.co.uk

THE WORKING CLASS can kiss my ass. The £40.00 'TITLE' is here at last. Plus land of course). www.scottishhighlandtitles.co.uk

TITLES – LORD, LADY etc. Tel/Fax 0800 652 6641. www.elitetitles.co.uk

6 FOOT PHOTOBANNERS – £39.95. 0121 241 7878 – www.ctgraphics.co.uk

SPECIAL OCCASION? click on to www.name-your-own-rose.com for something special.

ANDY WARHOL-STYLE Personalised Portraits – "The Ideal Gift" – www.justlikeandy.com

MOSQUECLOCK.COM Home of the mosque-shaped azan alarm clock. www.mosqueclock.com

BUY A ONE-OFF ORIGINAL – old memorabilia, posters, advertisements, packaging: www.CollectableCollectables.com

THE ULTIMATE COMPLIMENT. Express your love and admiration on DVD. Make a film about your or your loved ones life. Shot by professional TV crew and copied to dvd. 020 7419 9550 or torquil@ttvpictures.tv

INSULTING, ORIGINAL and funny! Off-the-wall greetings cards like you've never seen before! www.figuredout.co.uk

EROTICA for discerning adults – Award winning videos and DVDs – hand picked titles – and the world's best sex toys – read the reviews and test results before you buy. Fast, secure and discreet service. Over 18s only. Available from www.blissbox.com retailers of the very best erotica and sex toys www.blissbox.com

EYE PROTECT

THE DEFENDER - Freelance minder/independent Security guard, tel 07986 808 990 (Message facility available)

CONFIDENTIAL DISCREET and professional security investigative and surveillance services. SEARCHERS ASSOCIATES Ltd. ASC registered. 01206 386844 – www.salsecurity.com

LIAR! LIAR! HANDHELD LIE DETECTOR Reliable portable electronic device for measuring truthfulness through voice. Only £35.95 inc p&p. Cheques, Pos, Credit/debit cards Gdf Tech, 30 Malton Rd, Intake, Doncaster, DN2 5JT, 01302 818147 – www.gdf-tech.co.uk

EYE READ

FREE BOOKSEARCH – No Purchase Obligation Twiggers Booksearch – 0208 878 8644. booksearch@twiggers.com

MAKES HENRY ROOT look like an elaborate hoax – www.ralphtritt.com

PUBLICATION OF THE YEAR 2003 nominee – 'In The Buff'. Erotic Literature magazine & fantasy writing service. 8 issues just £34.95. Ffi: 01227 762500 www.inthebuffmag.com

FUNNIEST BOOK EVER WRITTEN? E-mail pennybull@TOMAL.freeserve.co.uk for chucklesome details

EYE SAY

A TYPICAL ASYLUM SEEKER www.dradoko.com

MACHINE! You have sealed your fate. Local shops gossip campaign, the last straw. The future cannot now be altered. I wash my hands of you. CT.

FLESH POTS! PLAGUE PITS! Guided walk, music, free beer! 20th July. Meet 3pm Farringdon Station. £6 – advance booking only: 01234 404774 - walksandtalks@aol.com

NOW ALL CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS ARE REPEATED ON PRIVATE EYE MAGAZINE'S WEB-SITE www.private-eye.co.uk

where your advertisement will seen by thousands more readers – all over the world.

TIFFIN BOYS SCHOOL 1946-1971 - Were you psychologically scarred by your experiences there? - If so, Educational Researcher would like to know. Please write in confidence to Box 0584

CAPITAINE, "Lost without you." Delta G. Sous- Fifre xxx

EYE SELL

EYES NOS 17-1020 (12 Issues Missing) - East Midlands offers. Box 0484

TROUT FISHING Brecon area. Half mile plus. Bank along woodland and meadow. Easy Acess. £15,000 O.N.O Tel 07767657625

OLD PERSIAN RUGS – mostly £100 - £3000. Shed not shop – telephone first. DESMOND NORTH, East Peckham, Kent. 01622 871353.

WOBBLY TOWER? Real furniture to sylishly store your CDs, Videos, DVDs, LPs etc. 01295-760017 – www.john-austin-furniture.com

RUSSIAN WATCHES catalogue available. Tel (0115) 9827741. www.russianwatches.co.uk

PROMOTE...YOUR PRODUCT...YOUR BUSINESS...YOURSELF with full colour postcards at competitive prices. For sample pack phone 020 7737 7766 or E-mail: cardencounters@btclick.com

NEED A NEW HI-FI? For anything from DVD to Minidisc, surround sound to CD – nip down to RICHER SOUNDS and pick up the lowest-priced gear in the UK... GUARANTEED! For a free bargain-packed catalogue, call 0845 1 300 200.

MAGIC MUSHROOM growing kit – from Holland. £20 p.p. ERWIN, PO Box 120, Newtownabbey, BT36 4HQ.

FOR SALE DERELICT COTTAGE with land. Pembrokeshire (nr. National Park) £45,000. Call 01437 532448.

www.housecontents4sale.co.uk House and Contents for sale. Everything must go.

3 BEDROOM MAISONETTE, near shops, leisure, station. Borahwood. www.house37.com 020 8953 7722

SAVE 000S on brand new cars - most manufacturers, cheap finance available. www.marmaladecars.com

FREEVIEW SET TOP BOXES for only £69.99 Including delivery. Visit www.hebtech.com or email sales@hebtech.com

PINOCCHIO'S WMDS Found in Baghdad B & Q Exclusive. www.buggerbognor.com

PRIVATE EYE

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

£2.50 PER WORD VAT inclusive

£25.00 minimum charge

Border £12.00

Box Number £12.00

FAX 020 7923 5401

E-MAIL: private-eye@communicationsteam.com

www.private-eye.co.uk

DICTATE YOUR AD WITH CREDIT/DEBIT CARD

020 7837 4566

PRIVATE EYE,

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM,

3-11 PINE STREET, LONDON EC1R 0JH

NAME, ADDRESS & TEL NO:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Send your advertisement with cheque / postal orders or any debit / credit card. DO NOT SEND CASH.

NUMBER: .....

EXPIRY DATE: .....

ISSUE NUMBER (SWITCH): .....

☐ *Box number required.*

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Replying to a
PRIVATE EYE
box number?
Address your reply like this:

Box No....
PRIVATE EYE
Communications Team
3-11 Pine Street
LONDON
EC1R OJH

WE'RE BACK www.nhs-exposed.com THE TRUTH BEHIND THE WHITE COAT. **JAMES. JAMES.**

EYE TECH

EXCELLENT COMPUTER programmer seeks employment in the West Midlands or freelance work farther afield. Friendly, innovative and conscientious. More details: www.technospective.co.uk

SMS TEXT MARKETING works! text 077 66 40 41 42 with the word "eye" to receive info. Or visit http://sms.a-q.co.uk

WWW.OPENOPEN.ORG Open Source Software (OSS). Email help pe@openopen.co.uk

COMPUTER TROUBLE? let a genuine pc expert help you with advice, installation, setup, programming and trouble-shooting – and save yourself some big headaches. Call TOBY on 020 7229 3001 for friendly, professional advice.

8MM CINE TO VIDEO, DVD, CD or the Web. Proper telecine conversion, not a filmed botch job. www.video2cd.co.uk/pe We do Video to DVD too. 01438-220607

BCS LONDON LAPTOPS. Laptop and and PC repairs and sales. All brands and models repaired. Central London. Phone: 020 7252 3553. Enquiries@laptop-repairs.com

EYE WANT

DISCOVER WHO YOU WERE in a past life. Cosmic Psychic Lady writing book. Would you pay to have your past life included? Substantial Financial Backer and Publisher required. My material would make a Mega Film. Box 0284

THE TREASON SHOW. Comedy Writers required. £5 a sketch (approx). Send two sketch/song examples to markb@treasonshow.com Writers guidelines www.treasonshow.com

EYE WORK

MBA QUALIFIED SEEKS London based job for 1, 2 or 3 days a week. Wide commercial experience including general business administration & project management. Open to ideas & new opportunities. Box 1684.

www.brownpaper.co.uk – adult toys, sexy wear and naughties!

EYE CONTACT

THAI CONNECTION – Thailand's oldest agency. Over 650 marriages. Videos, brochure: 01582 481725.

NATURAL FRIENDS, where relationships just click. Free brochure 0800 281 933 www.natural-friends.com

ASIAN INTRODUCTIONS Guaranteed. Suman Marriage Bureau – Established 1972. (ABIA). 0208 571 5145. www.suman-online.com

CONTACT GENUINE single women & men online 24hrs. 60p/min JCG, tn219dz, 09050 626 088.

CHAT ROOM 25p/min 100+ girls online 24hrs. JCG tn219dz 09062 765264

EVERGREEN; Alternative to Dating Agencies/clubs. 01992 632250. www.evergreenagency.co.uk

www.abundantlove.com – quality dating for larger lovers worldwide database of plump and large men and women and the people who love them.

SINGLE? Waiting to meet that special Afro-Caribbean partner! Then call NubianLinks on +442075982136.

LONESOME OXBRIDGE BLUES? Why not meet somebody new at www.BluesMatch.com

REGULAR ADULT PARTIES, daytime & Evenings, luxury central London locations, couples & singles welcome, call Gordon 07971298111 limelight_club@lycos.com

EURO-ORIENTAL INTRODUCTIONS Meet your perfect oriental partner in the UK, for love, romance or marriage. Register free! 01442-386102 info@littlefish-intl.com – http://littlefish-intl.com

MATCHMAKER contact mag for adults. Over 1000 colour photos. Approval copy from MATCHMAKER (X.76), Chorley, PR7 4BS or 01257 483335 (24 hrs).

NEW OVER-50'S friendship club and newsletter. Call 0121 7837014 or write to Good Companions 511 Garretts Green Lane, Birmingham B33 0SG

SPEED DATING – the new way to meet other professionals. 20+ three minute face-to face dates in 1 night 08702 430 935 www.speeddater.co.uk

DATING LINE 0906 752 6299*, Live 1-2-1 Chat 0906 734 3206**, Gay Chat 0906 952 6006*, Adult Contact Ads 0905 235 5819**, Live Psychic 0906 734 3707**. http://www.harmonypartners.co.uk – PO Box 17, Ashford,TN23 7YQ. Calls cost *75p/**£1/min from BT Landlines.

EAST WEST DATING has a data base of oriental ladies living in the UK who would like to meet western men. 020 7351 0750.

AGED 30-49 Table for 2? Party of 8? New friends link and newsletter. Ring/text 07909 850323 or write to Buddies. PO Box 323, Brighton BN1 8UZ. E-Mail: LMBuddies@aol.com

RUSSIAN LADIES ATTRACTIVE & SINCERE seek relationship/marriage. Meet many of Russian ladies in Britain. Unlimited introductions. Excellent success rate. IFM 01708 478697 www.intromoscow.co.uk

FANTASY LINE: CALL 09099 100 146 – www.fantasyphone.co.uk – 75p per min PO Box 189 CA4 8GW.

FLIRT: CALL 09099 100 143 – www.phoneflirts.co.uk – 75p per min PO Box 189 CA4 8GW.

ADDITIONS – 'ATTACHED' Discreet Loving Agency for married people. 020 8905 3304, 020 8958 9657.

RESPECTABLE SINCERE marriage-minded Thai ladies seek like-minded gentlemen. Free brochure/ video. "Lawrence Lynch – dream weaver" (Louis Theroux BBC). 01562 748600 (24hrs). www.thai-professional.com

ATTACHED? SEEKING ROMANCE? Call David at LOVINGLINKS 020 7602 8727. Info line 0906 550 1361 (call cost £1 a minute)– www.lovinglinks.co.uk Discreet dating at the speed of E-mail.

FREE BLISSBOX.COM adult DVD & VHS catalogue – Call 00 31 84 870 5950 or send a 42p SAE to Black Dog Ltd, PO Box 15513, 1001 NA, Amsterdam, The Netherlands – EROTICA for discerning adults www.blissbox.com

TESTIMONIEYE

I ADVERTISED IN EYE LOVE in April and had a wonderful response from your gorgeous, witty and entertaining readership. Over 30 replies and not a nutter among 'em, in fact several charming gentlemen who have brightened up my social life quite considerably. READER, MIDDLESEX

Bulletin Builder

advertisement

How would you like to know exactly who reads your advert.....

Bulletin Builder is a new web-based product aimed at busy non-technical marketing managers, brand managers and owner managers. ***And you could use it entirely free.***

Bulletin Builder lets you create and distribute superb e-bulletins and deliver them right to your customer's inbox.

Of course it's perfectly possible to create powerful image-rich e-mail using web creation software and if you are capable and willing to spend the time, then fine. And once you have created a graphic e-mail you could then use your e-mail program to distribute it. But if you have tried that you will know its limitations.

.....and then build and make an offer **aimed precisely** at those people?

No need to involve your IT department

Bulletin Builder gets over all of these problems and makes it simplicity itself to build and distribute a series of e-bulletin issues. In fact you should be able to create and distribute your first issue within about an hour.

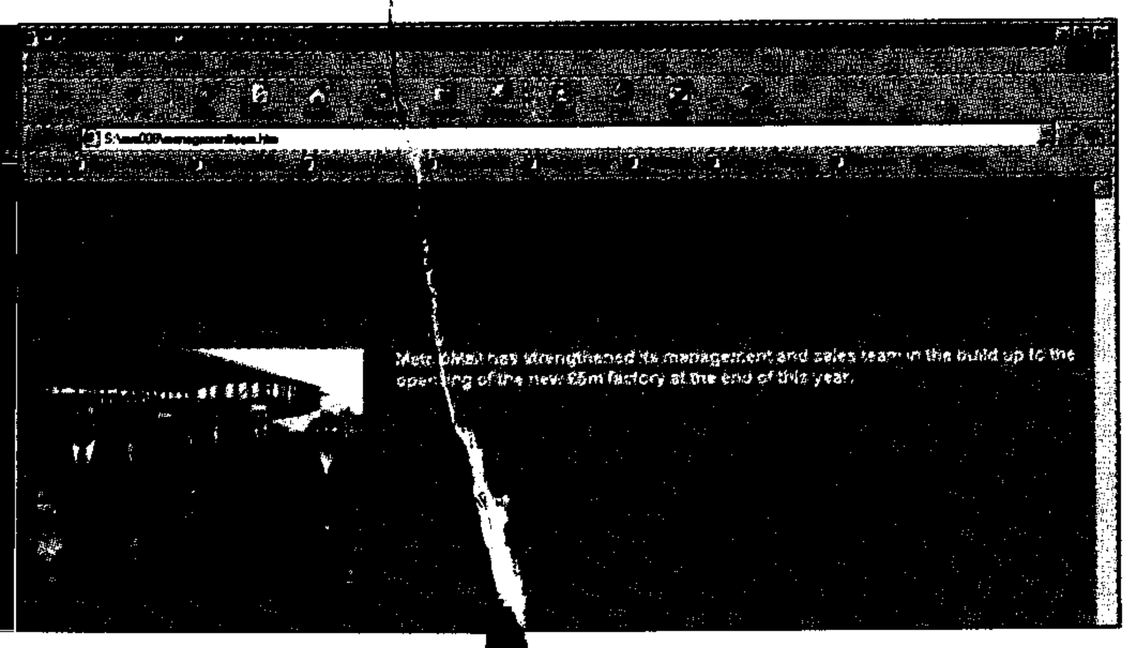
See at a glance which ads are more effective

Each story in your e-bulletin is automatically tagged for you, so that you can see how many people read them. In fact you get to see not just how many, but exactly who they are - you can even reply to them individually with a tailored special offer if you wish.

And you can work on your next issue wherever you are - at home, or at work, in an airport, or overseas - in fact anywhere you can get on the Internet - you simply go to the Bulletin Builder website and log on with your secure password.

But most of my contacts can't accept HTML email? Not so - Our recent research consistently showed that over 80% of recipients were able to read our e-bulletins in all their html glory. And that proportion appears to be growing as people upgrade their e-mail software. Visit our website where we are publishing up-to-date trends in e-mail developments.

But I don't like getting big e-mails in my inbox, so my customers will be upset if I send similar ones to them. Good point - which is why our system knows if you accidentally create a big e-bulletin that would take more than a few brief seconds to appear in their inboxes. The key to Bulletin Builder is that the deep information in your story is in a second layer that the client accesses only if he or she is interested.

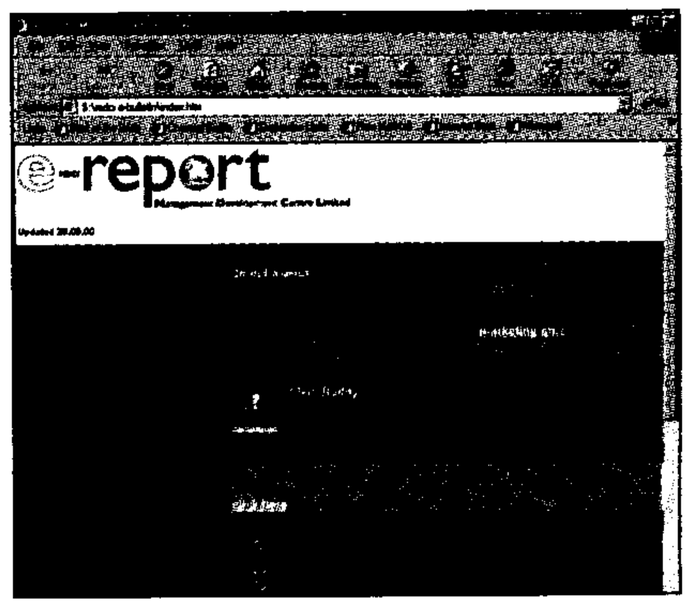


Customise your e-bulletins

Bulletin Builder lets you create a powerful and attractive e-bulletin from a selection of templates that you can customise. You can instantly see what these will look like on screen.

And if you want to design an e-bulletin that precisely matches your corporate style, we can help you do that too (although that's not available in the free version).

So what's the catch? Well, Bulletin Builder **Free** only lets you send your creations to up to 50 e-mail addresses. This may be enough for you, particularly if you want to use it for internal marketing - in which case you can continue to use it for free for as long as you like, but we hope you will want to send it to more people and upgrade to the option to send to up to 5000 addresses. This will cost you £50 per month, but you get quite a few extras for this too, including the analysis of results.



A fraction of the cost

Compare the costs with traditional newsletter distribution methods. Typically you might send out 5000 full colour newsletters once a quarter. Design, printing and distribution costs for that exercise - assuming you already own the list - would be in the order of £10,000. And there is all the attendant hassle of deadlines and proofs. To do the same exercise with Bulletin Builder would cost you just £600 and you could send it every week or every day if you wished. And you would have the major advantage too of knowing precisely who read it.

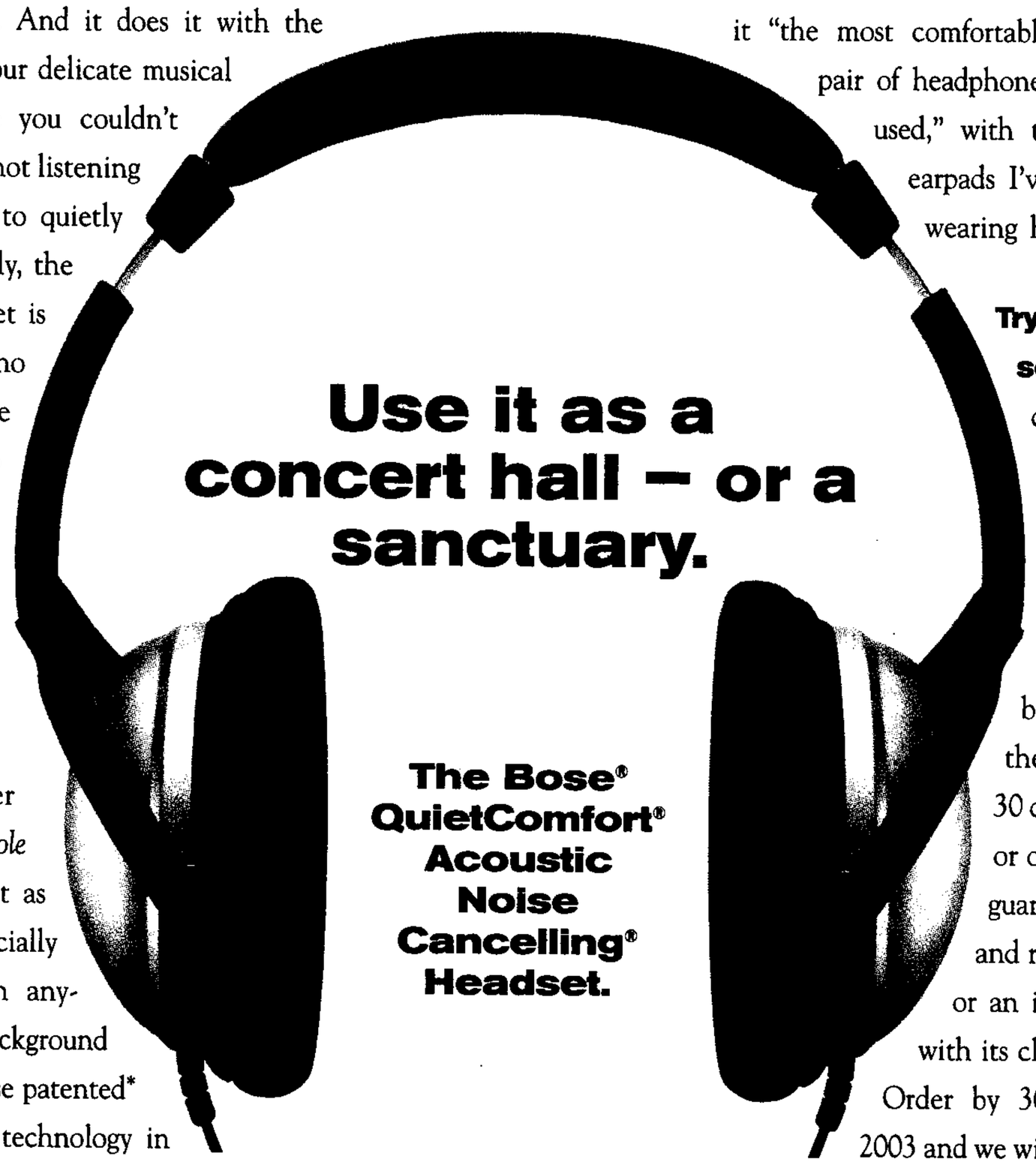
And where do I get my target lists? Our research shows that the best source for these is in the various e-mail address books scattered around your company PCs. Bulletin Builder provides an easy way to pull all these together into one list and avoids sending out duplicates. It automatically lets you know if someone decides to unsubscribe from your list if they don't like your first issue. Our experience is that very few people unsubscribe if they already know of your organisation.

So visit **www.bulletinbuilder.com** now and start creating your first e-bulletin issue today **for free**. For the next month we will be offering free help to write your stories and create e-mail-friendly headlines and link text.

Durham Associates Ltd. Old Coach House, Castle Eden, County Durham, TS27 4SS. Tel: 01429 837700 **www.bulletinbuilder.com**

Think of it as a Mute button for the world around you. Whether you're irritated by the engine roar on aeroplanes, noise of the city or bustle in the office, this headset lets you hush them all. And it does it with the flick of a switch. You savour delicate musical nuances in places where you couldn't before. And when you are not listening to music, you can use it to quietly enjoy a little peace. Clearly, the Bose QuietComfort headset is no ordinary headset. It is no exaggeration to say it's one of those things you have to experience to believe.

So comfortable, you may forget you're wearing it. With a weight of only 153 grams (5.4 ounces), the QuietComfort headset nestles lightly around your ears. Audio critic Mark Fleischmann calls it "the most comfortable full-sized pair of headphones I've ever used," with the "softest earpads I've encountered in 30 years of wearing headphones."

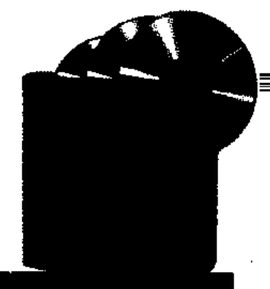


Use it as a concert hall – or a sanctuary.

The Bose® QuietComfort® Acoustic Noise Cancelling® Headset.

Reduce noise with Bose technology. Bose has developed advanced technologies to offer you benefits never available to you before. *Whole Earth* describes this headset as "perfectly wonderful," especially when you "need to listen anywhere there are a lot of background distractions." That is because patented* Bose technology in the QuietComfort headset electronically identifies and reduces the noise while faithfully preserving what you want to hear – music, film dialogue, or silence itself. *Upscale* magazine calls these headsets "revolutionary." *Time Out London* hails them as "positively sublime" and says they "really are worth a listen." *Sound & Vision* reports that they "can be a terrific antidote for delayed flights, engine noise, crackly airline headphones, and all the other nuisances passengers encounter."

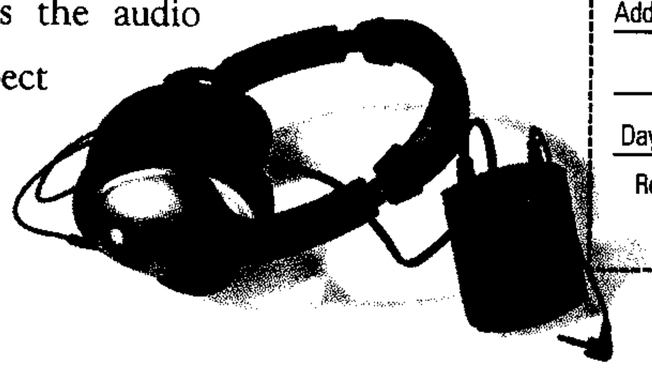
Try the QuietComfort headset with no obligation. We don't expect you to take our word for how dramatically this headset reduces noise, how great it sounds, and how comfortable it feels. You really must experience it to believe it. Call us free to try the QuietComfort headset for 30 days in your home, at the office or on your next trip – satisfaction guaranteed. Use it to think, work and relax in peace. Listen to music or an in-flight movie soundtrack with its clear, rich sound. Order by 30th September 2003 and we will include a free CD case that holds 24 CDs. If you love this headset, keep it. If you can bear to part with it, simply return it for a full refund of the purchase price.



Order by 30th September 2003 and receive a free CD case

Call Bose free on 0800 085 85 72. This headset is available directly from Bose. *Airfax2000.com* reports that "you will not regret one penny spent" on it. You can also take advantage of our instalment plan and make **five low monthly payments, with no interest charges from Bose.**** Call today to enjoy a very different kind of headset – the Bose QuietComfort headset.

Enjoy your music with Bose sound quality. The QuietComfort headset arrives ready to use with your portable CD/DVD/MP3 player, home stereo, laptop or office computer, and in-flight entertainment systems. The *Boston Globe* calls the audio quality "superb" and *TravelPlus* calls the audio quality "stunning." Just what you expect from Bose, one of the most respected names in sound.



Call 0800 085 85 72

Quoting Reference 8867

For information on all our products: www.bose.co.uk/8867

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Day Tel: _____ Eve Tel: _____

Return coupon to: Bose Ltd.
Freepost EX 151, Exeter, EX1 1ZY
No stamp necessary.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

If you do not wish to receive mailings from carefully selected companies, please advise us.

9 770032 888105 28>

*Patents issued and/or pending in the US and certain EU countries.**Instalment payment plan available on credit/debit cards only and subject to status. Your credit/debit card will be charged each month with 0% finance charge from Bose. In the event of a late payment, credit/debit card company interest charges may apply. Instalment payment plan and CD case cannot be combined with any other offer or applied to previous purchases. Price and/or payment plan subject to change without notice. Delivery subject to product availability. ©2003 Bose Corporation. All rights reserved. Quotes reprinted with permission from: *Whole Earth*, 12/00; *Upscale*, 3/01; *Time Out London*, 10/4/02; Rebecca Day, *Sound & Vision*, 12/00; Jerry Morris, *Boston Globe*, 24/10/99 on the original airline headset; *TravelPlus*, 4/0[illegible], the author of *Practical Home Theater*, 5/7/00 column; *www.airfax2000.com*, 6/00.